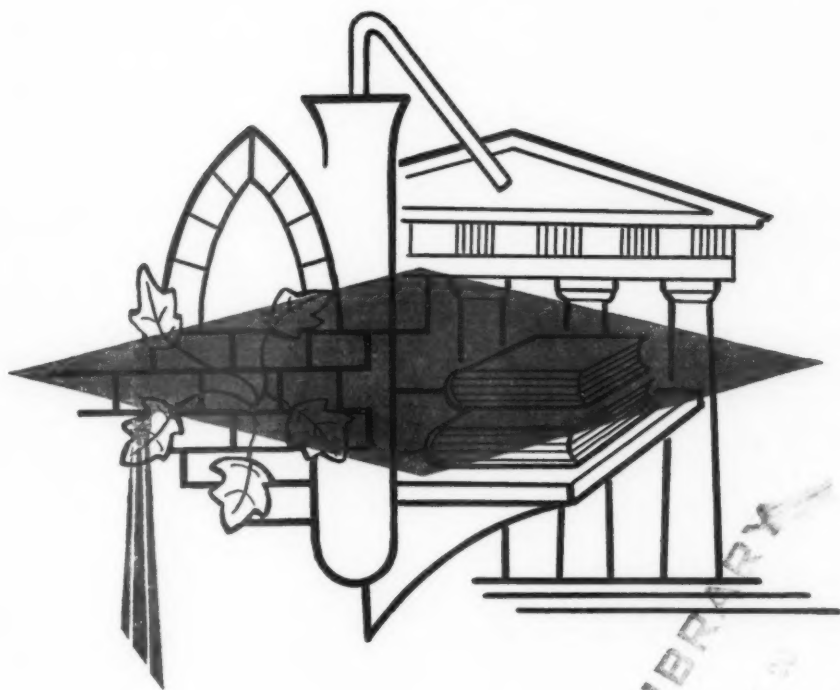


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# the christian SCHOLAR



TENSIONS AND COMMUNITY IN ACADEMIC LIFE

Roland M. Frye  
Clyde A. Holbrook  
L. O. Katsoff

William L. Kolb  
Peter Viereck  
Ian G. Barbour

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**257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York**

The purpose of the Commission on Christian Higher Education is to develop basic philosophy and requisite programs within its assigned field; to awaken the entire public to the conviction that religion is essential to a complete education and that education is necessary in the achievement of progress; to foster a vital Christian life in college and university communities of the United States of America; to strengthen the Christian college, to promote religious instruction therein, and to emphasize the permanent necessity of higher education under distinctly Christian auspices.

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## The Editor's Preface

One can readily imagine a panel discussion devoted to the subject, "Christian Commitment and a Scientific World-View." The speaker would be selected from the science faculties, and each would be asked to give his view of how he holds both to his Christian faith and does his research and teaching in his field. The first, taking a kind of "fundamentalist" position, might tend to deny, in instances of conflict, the conclusions of science. The second might hold that there are few detailed implications of a Christian world-view which, in fact, conflict and that even these can be accommodated within the larger view to new scientific conclusions. The third, going even farther, might say that he can admit only one kind of knowledge, that which is gained by scientific investigation, and that direct intuitive apprehensions, which are by *faith*, ought not and need not condition the bodies of knowledge. The fourth, taking a new approach, insists that neither science nor religion are based upon or necessarily give rise to "metaphysical presuppositions"; instead of underlying assumptions, he finds only various ground rules, certain instincts, and, at worst, misunderstanding.

The chaplain or university pastor who arranged the program has held until last the biologist, let us say, who is up on the latest writings. He stands in the Nash-Moberly-Coleman tradition; he has read Butterfield, Mannheim, and the others who have posed the problem of presuppositions. He acknowledges that scholars are finite creatures, that knowledge is, in part, relative to our perspectives, and that despite presup-

positions one must assert the reality of an objective search in our concern lest the intellectual quest is reduced to a mockery. When he rises to speak he first acknowledges his wholehearted identification with his science; he reveals that it is his life, and he has published books and monographs to back him up (but which he doesn't mention). At the same time, he discloses in simple language his deep Christian faith and his devotion as a member of the Church. But then he **makes his astonishing confession**: "Between the two I am being torn apart." Two life-commitments were in tension within him, and he said he could bear the conflict and live with the unresolved dichotomy only within the Christian community, where he received the grace to overcome impatience, forgiveness for his failures to find solutions, and the love which revealed, by faith, that all things cohere in Christ.

Because there is a profound sense of the real problem in the statements of the biologist, we are devoting this issue of *The Christian Scholar* to the subject of "Tensions and Community in Academic Life." Without wishing to detract from the **importance** of discussing presuppositions, or of seeking ways of relating **Christian faith** and our various disciplines, the tensions between life-commitments are not on an intellectual plane alone. They can be escaped by being seriously Christian on Sundays, and of having a "job" on week-days in the classroom, laboratory, or library. They can perhaps be escaped also by finding a few convenient crevices in one's discipline where one can insert a Christian point of view. But in the one instance

our calling to bring our whole life under obedience to God is denied, and in the other the lecture-desk becomes a pulpit and the university is confused with the Church. Neither way asks, on a deep level, how the devoted Christian can at the same time identify himself fully with his vocation of scholarship and teaching.

The articles in this issue, for the most part, seek to explore the tasks of scholarship as being the context of the glorification of God. There appear to be two basic affirmations which provide some continuity. One is implicit—the sense of the living God. Its absence in the university, and all-too-often in the Christian college, reinforces the normal academic certainty that anything can be finally explained in its own terms. Certainly there is no excuse for a Christian to be less than competent in his subject; he must sustain the general code of belief which makes his scholarly work possible. But, if God is living, then truth is active, it makes demands on us, it judges us, and it requires decision of us. The disturbing, as well as the ultimately freeing, sense of the living God both deepens the tensions between commitments for the Christian faculty member and provides him a reference for living with, and not impatiently dissolving, the tensions.

The other affirmation is related to this. The consciousness of the living

God as the reality behind all knowledge and work is the central source of vitality for the Christian community in the university. It is as we join together, as part of the whole Church but within the concrete situation of the university, that the tensions can be borne and become productive, and that the members in their respective places can grow in response to the life-giving Spirit of the Living God. It is, moreover, in this way, that teachers can join with their fellow-members of the academic community whose task is Christian evangelism. This takes place not by saving people for the Church by saving them from education, but it happens through the life of the Christian community there. It is, finally, in such a community, when it is truly open to the Spirit of God, that the Christian and the non-Christian can meet, not to prolong argument or to try to corner one another by "tandemonologue", but as colleagues who seek understanding of one another, who may by grace find forgiveness, and who in love may join in their common tasks. God has promised men, not that we can escape tensions or conflict, but that He will give us His love, so that we may be sustained, seek forgiveness, and find that unity which our common tasks demand. The cross, which is the symbol of that promise, assures us that God has taken our conflict upon Him and that he gives us, in its place, the freedom and hope to do our work to His glory and to pray for his renewing Spirit.

# The Priesthood of The Scholar

L. O. KATTSOFF



IN RECENT YEARS it has become more and more apparent that scholars are part of the world in which they live. The very title of this paper would have been considered either a contradiction in terms, an indication of the prostitution of scholarship, or a vapid honorific phrase that purports to say something about the scholar's dedication to his work. How, it would be urged, could a scholar qua scholar be a priest; and how could a priest qua priest be a scholar? Does not either vocation exclude the other? Can we really speak of scholarship in the interest of priesthood? A few years ago I too would have said (and did say) that the two are incompatible. Now I am not sure. But what can it mean to speak of the priesthood of the scholar? Is not the scholar a secular person—and if so he cannot be a priest.

These questions, with which I am concerned, seem to me to be possible because the words 'priest' and 'scholar' are taken in too literal a sense. Yet even if we take them in their most literal sense—the priest as a functionary in a church, the scholar as a functionary in a university — there are and have been numerous instances of priests who were scholars or scholars who were priests and who did excellent works in both fields. I think of Mendel as but one example in a field—genetics—usually considered far outside the realm of a priest. The very expressions 'scholars who were priests' and 'priests who were scholars' indicate the inherent separation of the two tasks. Mendel was a priest; he *also* was a scholar.

There is still a sort of cold war between science and theology. Scientists and theologians "respect" each other today—but each resents the other's infringements. It appears to me, however, that the real struggle between them is much deeper than a mere disagreement about the right to use what is honorifically called scientific method in theological debates, or the right of the theologian to discount if not reject scientific results by evaluating them in terms of religious dogmas. If one is clear in his thought, he sees the absurdity of being a religious physicist, in the sense in which 'religious' is an adjective modifying the physics and not the physicist. In the same way, it is equally nonsense to speak of a scientific theology in the sense in which 'science' means empirical and modifies the theology. Physics cannot be religious; and religion (or theology) cannot be scientific. But when one talks *about* physics as a world-view, it is possible to consider its relation to other world-views. Likewise, if one wants to talk about religion or theology one can note its relations to the language used in physics. In a sense, then, the real root of the so-called struggle between science and theology lies here — in the inherent imperialism of each striving to include the other in its scope. But this imperialism is not simply a struggle for power, but a conflict in what the world is ultimately like—i.e., a conflict in basic ontologies.

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## THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR

Perhaps this sounds obvious; but it can bear repetition and emphasis, especially when one reads articles which try to show how theology can significantly be called scientific, and how the results of science do or do not contradict, or at least oppose, theological principles. It always seems to me that arguments that try to show that religion (or theology) is not anti-science, or that science is not anti-religion (or theology), tacitly gives science a position relative to religion that simply isn't correct. It seems to say, "See, here! Science is *the* method of arguing truth about things and its results are vastly superior to anything we have in any other area."

### II

However, our real problem is different—what is the priesthood of a scholar?

A priest is a mediator, in a sense. He, so to speak, represents God to man and man to God. But actually he is more. A priest is one who has dedicated all his thoughts and actions to do God's work on earth. His will is subordinated to God's will; his love is dedicated to expanding God's love; his life is devoted to the spread of the Gospel. He sees the world and all in it as an expression of God and dependent upon God, and he lives in that knowledge. As a priest his function is to live, not to seek knowledge as does the scholar; but he seeks to know more about God, as a child may seek to know more about his father, or a lover of his beloved.

Now it seems to me that Christianity demands precisely this sort of relationship between man and God. Man is totally dependent upon God and his life must be completely dedicated to "doing God's work" and to the "glorification of God." To the extent that he lives as a Christian, a man is also a priest in this wider sense of the term, for he is doing God's work and glorifying God upon whom he depends. If this is the case, then a Christian, being a priest, cannot split his life into compartments nor into vocations. A Christian can have only one vocation, his priesthood. He cannot be a Christian who is also a scholar, or a shoemaker, or an engineer, or a doctor. His very scholarship, work as a shoemaker, activity as an engineer, and healing as a doctor must be in terms of that priesthood. No aspect of life fails to have its significance for a Christian in its relation to his Christianity. It is not that a Christian will make better shoes because he is a Christian, as if one who wants to be a more capable shoemaker must become a Christian. This is obviously not so, and even ludicrous to suggest. It is not that a Christian is a better, i.e., more creative and rigorous, mathematician than one who is not, as if baptism also conferred logical rigor. The history of mathematics is enough to show the absurdity of such a notion. But a man who is a mathematician is a Christian in so far as he devotes his life to priesthood. He uses his knowledge in praising God and sees his knowledge as knowing God.

This is uncommonly like saying that a Christian uses his knowledge for the sake of his priesthood. This is exactly what I do mean to say, but with a difference that needs to be clarified. The Christian cannot, for example, do the absurd thing of trying

## THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SCHOLAR

to "prove" that God exists by the use of meaningless expressions such as  $\frac{n}{0} = D$ . Nor, in my opinion, should he appeal to the principle of indeterminacy in physics as evidence of a universe in which God can intervene. If one is a Christian, then he knows God can intervene, and has intervened in Christ, in the universe. God doesn't need permission from the physicists to do what He proposes. Similar sorts of things can be said about the proofs for the existence of God.

The existence of moral behavior does not prove that God exists, and indeed cannot. The fact that there is a Cosmos does not prove that God exists, and cannot. That events are contingent is no satisfactory reason for the reality of a necessary being. The simple truth is exactly the converse. Moral behavior is possible because God is. Moral behavior is God manifesting himself. One can only go from the source to its manifestation, never conversely. This is particularly true if the source is at a higher level than its manifestation. To know that moral behavior is a manifestation, is to know just that it is so. One cannot argue that because it is, there is God without begging the very matter at issue, namely, that it is a manifestation. In the same way, that events are contingent can only be known if one knows their necessary ground. One cannot argue from the contingency of events to the necessary ground unless one already assumes they are so contingent. It is possible to discover laws of physics without being a Christian; but one cannot see the laws as God's work, nor see that knowledge of the laws of nature is knowledge of God, nor use these laws to effectuate a Christ-like relation with God and man without being a Christian—a priest of God.

There are many ways of doing God's work and the glorification of God can be accomplished in all walks of life and vocations. But it is equally true that work that is God's work and work that can be done for the glorification of God can both be done for the glorification of something less than God—even man—and be the work of something less than God—even men. Atomic energy can be used to heal the sick and feed the poor; or it can be used to secure power so that a man may feel himself strong enough to challenge God. Indeed, medicine can be used to defy death—either as evidence of Christ's promise, or of man's ability to do without God. In short, men can in their vocations and their lives either witness for Christ, or for the State, or for men. In more theological terms this means that men can in their lives show the efficacy of Grace or the devastation of sin and their consequent alienation from God. This is true for scholars who in this respect have shown themselves equally adaptable to the vocation of God's work as to that of the Devil (figuratively speaking). For scholars are ready to aid in healing or in destroying; they serve God but they also serve a Hitler not as a possible agent through whom God works but as a usurper of God's prerogatives.

Not too many years ago, the scholar saw himself as a special sort of person. He was aloof from the work of the world. He sought truth and cared not whom he served nor how it was utilized. Indeed, he tended to forget, if he ever fully



## THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR

realized, that the truth he sought was God's manifestation (dare I say Incarnation?) in and through the world in which he lived. The scholar tried to isolate himself even from his very vocation as scholar. He came to be a pathetic figure—ridiculed, yet feared.

His very harmlessness was his undoing because he was not harmless since his work provided the material that could be used to distort the world in which he lived, to change the very history of the world so that the promise of the Resurrection could be made to look like the threat of insanity—in brief to enhance human sinfulness. This is the truth of Jesus' insight that he who is not with us is against us. For Jesus does not mean to say that he who is not with us is fighting against us, but that he who does not do God's work and does not glorify God in his life, must inevitably be doing the work of those who alienate themselves from God and either curse or deny God. This may not be wilful and certainly is often unpremeditated—but the deed is done nevertheless.

In recent years the anomalous nature of the scholar had come to be recognized and someone spoke of "the treason of the intellectual." What was meant seemed to be that in the struggle against the rising tide of evil, the scholar betrayed his very profession of a scholar by continuing to believe he could be neutral. The cliché, "the search for truth," was condemned for what it was for many scholars, a sort of academic curtain to hide from the scholar the brutal facts of the continuing struggle in men's souls between the "angels of light and the angels of darkness." The search for Truth, as Spinoza saw so clearly, is the search for God—and the scholar who is truly dedicated to his task which is his life, seeks God through and in the truth about the world in which he lives.

As a scholar, a man is a priest. He not only witnesses for God in his life, but seeks to reveal God in His creation. Dedication to the discovery of truth about the world in which he has his existence is going about the doing of God's work. His intolerance of error and meticulous methods are both possible in non-Christian scholars as well as Christian. But the knowledge that these are for the glory of God and their successful use possible only through God—these are Christian traits.

The paradox of being a scholar is that in a definite sense the scholar needs his "ivory tower" to do his best work; but at the same time he cannot do God's work completely by remaining in that tower. I venture to suggest that the real meaning of 'ivory tower' is that the scholar must not let man's work interfere with the doing of God's work. The truth, in other words, that the Christian scholar seeks is dedicated to the service of God and not the ambitions of men. As a servant of God, the scholar must take his place in the ranks of "the children of light." In this way the solitude of scholarship becomes the community of priests. The scholar leaves his tower and enters the Church because he has taken sides, now recognizing that his scholarship is not thereby prostituted by being given significance as part of God's world.

## To Synthesis Through Community

ROLAND MUSHAT FRYE



THE EMERGENCE WITHIN COLLEGES and universities of a consciousness, sometimes vague and at other times quite clear, that Christian patterns of life and thought are legitimately relevant to intellectual and academic endeavor is one of the most significant facts of our age. The significance, to be sure, may be variously interpreted, for the movement should and does carry diverging meanings within its own membership. But some things are clear, and one of these is that the effort of Christian faculty members stands out in sharp reaction against the compulsory secularism of our age. In its exploration of the relevance of Christianity for the life of the mind, the movement may well presage the achievement in future years of a new and revitalized intellectual atmosphere. It will, as I see it, go beyond the re-establishment of a pastoral relationship between teachers and students (although that must surely be one of its goals), and it will be concerned with considerably more than the piecemeal reduction of apostasy. Most certainly it must avoid a semi-illiterate religious obscurantism on the one hand as well as a curds-and- whey brand of pseudo-Christian sentimentality on the other. And it is to be hoped that it will maintain even in its most serious endeavor that sense of proportion and sense of humor—even of levity—which Robert Browning declared could exist only because of the strong conviction, "I do believe!"<sup>1</sup>

Born in an age of confusion, the movement is still in its formative stages, and has been concerned at least as much with criticism of existing patterns as it has been with the construction of new patterns. As Disraeli said a century ago, it is much easier to be critical than correct. Almost anyone can make clever and captious remarks about the parlous state of education in our time, and it is sometimes nice to prescribe sweet panaceas. But these can easily oversimplify and represent an attempt to remake education in the individual speaker's image — a perennial practice against which Emerson warned when he remarked that "you should never try to make another person like yourself, because you know and I know and God knows that one like you is enough."

The Christian educator must be constantly on guard against the temptation to present his own views, enchained as these are to his own time and place and personality, as if they were the will of the eternal God. Of course, other educators are equally subject to this absolutizing tendency, but our immediate concern is with the perspective of the Christian who works out his vocation in the college or university, and here we must be forever alert that we do not take the name of the Lord our God in vain, using it as a brand-mark for the inferior and ephemeral products of our own wishful thinking. It must be clear, above all, that it is not by the much saying of

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<sup>1</sup>*Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning: 1845-46* (New York, 1899), II, 434. It would, I believe, be almost impossible to overestimate the value of humor for the Christian living in such a culture as ours.



"Lord, Lord" that we shall enter into the kingdom of God, and that it is not merely by lifting the cross to our intellectual mastheads that we become intellectually Christian.

When placed against this background of danger and of opportunity, I suggest that our present situation calls upon us, not as individuals but as a community of scholars, to recognize essentially long range goals and to assume the challenge of making Christianity relevant, within the severest academic integrity, to the entire compass of modern man's intellectual life. Christianity offers a workable hypothesis by which the varied areas of life and thought can be understood and interpreted, and in a culture in which the "working hypothesis" has assumed the role of primary intellectual device, Christian thinkers have an opportunity and a responsibility which they cannot in conscience repudiate. What I wish to advocate in this paper is that the Christian faculty movement should embark upon the communal adventure of re-charting the landscape of reality<sup>2</sup> in terms of the Christian understanding.

Certain developments in modern thought make possible the success of such an endeavor. Of primary importance here is the widening recognition that "objectivity" is a weak reed upon which to rest any intellectual structure, and the supplanting of an absolutist objectivity by the concept of the working hypothesis. Not all scholars, of course, recognize what is taking place, and there is a natural reluctance to abandon the long fashionable assumption that we, as investigators, are unbiased, cool, detached, and that our conclusions are the fruit of investigation uncloyed with subjective alloy. It has been fashionable, and in some quarters still is fashionable, for scholars to assume a mien of Olympian detachment and to act as though their conclusions were the emergent products of the facts under investigation. The facts should speak for themselves, it has been assumed, and we ought not to inject value judgments into either teaching or scholarship. But at the very moment when we say *ought*, when it is contended that we "ought not" to inject value judgments into our work, we have already injected a value judgment, have already betrayed a bias — namely, that we ought to follow one practice rather than another. Thus the whole Pandora's box of troublesome choices is opened before us, and we are involved inescapably with the problem of value judgments.

Nonetheless, college and university instruction is still powerfully influenced by what is sometimes called the "cult" of objectivity, according to which scholars should avoid presuppositions like the plague. Howard Lowry writes that this cult of objectivity has "become more than the honest pursuit of truth. It has become almost a religion itself and has raised in the modern mind a new kind of god — a god in whose name we can bewitch ourselves." In the worship of this new god, this aca-

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<sup>2</sup>The very expressive phrase "Christian landscape of reality," which I use frequently in this paper, is a brilliant coinage of Emile Caillet's, and indicates better than any other single phrase with which I am familiar the *total* relevance of Christianity to human thought, life and endeavor.

## TO SYNTHESIS THROUGH COMMUNITY

demic zero symbol, the academician feels bound to neutrality and impartiality in the area of value judgments. As Lowry observes, it is indeed "amusing to see how quickly one can acquire in academic circles a kind of reputation for profundity, modesty, and a gigantic intellect merely by refusing to conclude anything."<sup>3</sup>

The situation of course is not new. Pascal long since remarked on one aspect of it when he pointed out that being busy is one way to avoid the misery of thinking. But this diagnosis is unfair to many whose fear of commitment is rather a fear of falling into error than a dread of thinking. It is in this regard that Lowry's analogy to religion applies, for there are many who regard the expression of value judgment as a sin. Of them, St. Augustine wrote fifteen hundred years ago:

Now in their eyes every error is regarded as a sin, and they think that error can only be avoided by entirely suspending belief. For they say that the man who assents to what is uncertain falls into error; and they strive by the most acute, but most audacious arguments, to show that, even though a man's opinion should by chance be true, yet that there is no certainty of its truth, owing to the impossibility of distinguishing truth from falsehood.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, it becomes academically "sinful" to reach a judgment of value.

In attempting to find escape from these problems, scholars have sometimes acted as though the processes of simple cataloguing, of simple inspection of data, afforded a sure ground for building an impregnable tower of objective knowledge. It is as though we were to relieve ourselves of the travail of bringing forth decisions by allowing the data itself to decide for us. But the data will not decide. Whitehead traces our difficulty to an oversimplification by Francis Bacon: "Induction has proved to be a somewhat more complex process than Bacon anticipated. He had in his mind the belief that with a sufficient care in the collection of instances the general law would stand out of itself. We know now, and probably Harvey knew then, that this is a very inadequate account of the processes which issue in scientific generalization."<sup>5</sup>

Even if induction represented no more than a mystic voice somehow speaking for a certain sum of facts, we would still have the problem of arriving at the facts themselves. We need not dwell at length upon how difficult it is to arrive at certain historical and aesthetic facts, but it is interesting to note that a similar and perhaps even more basic difficulty is encountered in arriving at physical facts. The point may be illustrated from Lincoln Barnett's *The Universe and Dr. Einstein*:

The Principle of Uncertainty asserts that it is absolutely and forever impossible to determine the position and the velocity of an electron at the same time—to state con-

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<sup>3</sup>Howard F. Lowry, *The Mind's Adventure* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1950), pp. 73 and 78.

<sup>4</sup>St. Augustine, *Basic Writings of*, ed. Whitney J. Oates (New York: Random House, 1948), I. 669-70.

<sup>5</sup>Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: Mentor, 1954), p. 44.

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fidently that an electron is "right here at this spot" and is moving at "such and such a speed." For by the very act of observing its position, its velocity is changed; and, conversely, the more accurately its velocity is determined, the more indefinite its position becomes.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly in the social sciences, the mere presence of the investigator alters, however slightly, the status of whatever social situation is being investigated. It thus becomes increasingly apparent that "facts," as we can know them, can scarcely be equated with "facts" in and of themselves, apart from our own intrusion upon them. As Barnett puts it, whenever man "attempts to penetrate and spy on the 'real' objective world, he changes and distorts its workings by the very process of his observation."<sup>7</sup>

Another problem now opens up before us. As we cannot investigate everything, all observation is necessarily based upon selection. In history and the social sciences this matter is central, for it would surely be no rational endeavor to investigate all that has ever happened to man and society. The very thought confronts us with a vertigo of confusion. But if we do not investigate everything, we have introduced choice, which in turn is based upon value judgments. James B. Conant, in writing of this situation as it exists in science, has emblemized it for all investigators and teachers:

In his laboratory, every scientist is forever deciding that this is a better way to proceed than that. Every experiment he plans was, in its inception, cradled by judgments of what would be worth while, what would warrant the effort, including an overall value judgment that the investigator should stay in his laboratory rather than go fishing.<sup>8</sup>

Non-objective judgments thus appear to be inescapable. Even though we may long for the relative simplicity of a pure Baconian approach to knowledge, we must nonetheless recognize its impossibility. The facts do not speak for themselves, and even if they did we should still have the virtually insuperable problem of arriving at the facts, and even if we could arrive at a perfect understanding of facts as such we would still have introduced non-objective elements in the process of selecting the facts to be investigated. We cannot discard presuppositions, and we cannot operate intellectually without working hypotheses. What we can and must do is to bring our presuppositions out into the open, and subject our hypotheses to the most rigorous and critical examination.

On the basis of all this some thinkers are inclined towards a universal relativism, and yet a relativistic approach no more grows out of the facts, is no more *given* by the facts, than is an absolutist approach. Relativism, like absolutism, is imposed upon the facts. Are we to conclude, then, with a total agnostic suspension *in re* truth?

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<sup>6</sup>Lincoln Barnett, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* (New York: Mentor, 1954), p. 37.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>8</sup>James B. Conant, *Modern Science and Modern Man* (New York: Doubleday, Anchor, 1953), p. 137.

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We may, but, again, to do so will not be to derive our viewpoint from the facts, but to impose it upon them. Our task is to arrive at an understanding which explains the data of existence, and renders that data manageable, with the highest degree of economy and of beauty.

All in all, I suggest, the sanest point of view, the least subject to serious contradiction, the most inclusivist, appears to be the acceptance of the assumption of objective reality, the acceptance of the *thereness* of Truth whether we know it or not, and whether we understand it or not (which we usually do not). This acceptance may be called inclusivist only when it is accompanied by a theory of the limited perceiver, a realization that the human instrument is faulty and deceptive as investigator, by the recognition of Kierkegaard's insight that although essential truth is not necessarily a paradox, it nonetheless frequently "becomes paradoxical by virtue of its relationship to an existing individual."<sup>9</sup>

I hope that the relevance of all this for the Christian professor is readily apparent. I am *not* suggesting that, since absolute objectivity is impossible, all faculty members should slough off their secular skins and endorse the Christian religion. Nor do I suggest that public colleges and universities should declare for God, whatever that may mean. Above all, I do not imply that the failure of the cult of objectivity as I have treated it requires academics to become, in mass, a conglomerate defense for *a priori* dogmatism and assent. There is such a thing as a "Christian racket," and this is it. We can demonstrate to the satisfaction of competent men in a wide variety of fields that objectivity as a cult is bankrupt, but to capitalize upon this fact by an *ex cathedra* re-enthronement of the Athanasian Creed is quite another matter. The Christian faculty movement is engaged in no such intellectual chicanery.

The recognition of the limits of objectivity does, however, have most important implications for all college and university educators. In terms of the unexamined assumptions of objectivity by which most higher education still operates, it would appear impossible for a person to be at one and the same time a Christian thinker and a scholar or teacher. Of course it would also be impossible to be at once a materialist, or a positivist, or a classical humanist and also a scholar or teacher, although this observation has been less often made as it borders upon being unfashionable. But if the cult of objectivity is not tenable, as it is not, then it becomes obvious that a person's individual orientation is intensely relevant for his professional tasks. In some fields, of course, the specifically Christian viewpoint may never find expression either in teaching or in scholarship, but this situation exists because of the configuration of the particular field involved, and not because conviction as such is outlawed.

Where it is impossible to treat a subject in terms of organically relevant reference to a religious and ethical structure of value, the teacher, whether his loyalties

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<sup>9</sup>Soren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* from *A Kierkegaard Anthology* (Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 216.

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are Christian or not, must recognize that fact; otherwise he will be a charlatan, although perhaps a pious one. In all cases the Christian especially must be intellectually above reproach, out of reverence for the truth which is God's, not his, as he stands in the full and limitless assurance that all truth is orthodox, for it is established by God. Even in those areas where the Christian can properly establish few, if any, cognitive relations between Christian values and his subject (for example, whereas distinctively Christian interpretations of philosophy, of historic fact, or of literary experience are possible, such a distinctively Christian approach is irrelevant to chemistry), he can still in fairness indicate to his classes the *limits* of his subject, so that there may be less inclination to exalt natural law to the status of ethical object lesson. And, above all, his teaching and research can make implicitly patent that reverence for God's truth, wherever found, which must be a primary characteristic of the Christian thinker.

Our problem is the old problem of achieving unity, of attaining a tenable universal view of life and of thought. No profound intuition is required for us to observe that modern education, like modern society, has no more unity than a shattered vase. To say this is not to imply that we should seek to solve our problem by finding and wearing some convenient monolithic strait jacket of the mind. No expedient could be more futile, or indeed fatal, for higher learning. But in examining the present posture of our affairs, we cannot avoid noticing the absence of any unifying concepts, ideas and doctrines. If there is any theory under which our higher educational endeavor may be said to operate, it is the cafeteria or bargain counter conception of education, under which each student and faculty member may offer and shop and buy to please his own tastes. A recent count of the catalogue of one well regarded university indicates that under-graduates are offered some three hundred and sixty courses, from which they must choose thirty-six in order to graduate as bachelors of one thing or another. Robert Benchley, in his delightful essay "What College Did to Me," describes the general effect of such a college education in this way: "In my days a student could elect to take any course in the catalog, provided no two of his choices came at the same hour. The only things he was not supposed to mix were scotch and gin. This was known as the elective system. Now I understand that the boys have to have, during the four years, at least three courses beginning with the same letter." On a different plane, Alfred North Whitehead also points to the "fatal disconnection of subjects which kills the vitality of our modern curriculum."<sup>10</sup>

This disunity in good measure, at least, entered the colleges as a result of President Eliot's free elective system. It is but a short step from President Eliot's assertion that the dominating idea of education should be "the enthusiastic study of subjects for the love of them and without any ulterior motive," to the assumption that all knowledge is of equal value, that "facts are facts," and from there to the complete collapse of any unitive factors. "Learning for learning's sake" becomes a

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<sup>10</sup>Whitehead, *The Aims of Education* (New York: Mentor, 1952), p. 18.



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sort of creed, but it is, I suggest, a fatuous one with no more real substance than a parallel affirmation of "highways for highways' sake" or "business for business' sake." To regard education as its own aim is to beg the question, albeit comfortably.

It is at this point in any discussion of these problems that those of us who are espousers of the humanistic disciplines are expected to step forward gallantly and sound a trumpet for a "return to the humanities," from which all blessings are said to flow. I have no intention of sounding that trumpet. We humanists have failed as abysmally as others — perhaps more abysmally, considering our opportunities. We have too often climbed conspicuously into our ivory towers and prayed loudly to thank Jupiter that we are not like our colleagues, the academic publicans and sinners. We have too often committed the primary intellectual sin of making ourselves irrelevant to life, while at the same time calling upon others to go and do likewise. I recall a passage from "Homer and Humbug," by that redoubtable social scientist Stephen Leacock, where he writes:

I know there are solid arguments advanced in favour of the classics. I often hear them from my colleagues. My friend the professor of Greek tells me that he truly believes the classics have made him what he is. This is a very grave statement, if well founded. Indeed I have heard the same argument from a great many Latin and Greek scholars. They all claim, with some heat, that Latin and Greek have practically made them what they are. This damaging charge against the classics should not be too readily accepted. In my opinion some of these men would have been what they are, no matter what they were.

Indeed, it appears to me that we must admit humanistic education to be generally less effective, in terms of the college graduates' total existence, than is technical education. After all, the scientists and technologists have achieved a pretty high degree of effectiveness in preparing men to work in various fields, and this is in large part due to the fact that they know what is required in science and technology. Our major educational problems are not basically posed either in or by these areas, although they frequently serve as scapegoats, but grow rather out of our corporate inability to say anything very meaningful about the nature of the good life. The scientists have successful working hypotheses as to what makes for good science. We humanists, on the other hand are hopelessly divided as to what constitutes humanity and as to what makes for the good life for man; it is thus not strange that we have been unable to implement the good life in human society even at a time when more students than ever before are available to us in the colleges and universities. Thus, although higher education may not be responsible for the development of the phenobarbital age, it has not prevented that development. And it cannot prevent such a development until it — or rather until we — are willing to depart boldly and creatively from the old and hallowed paths. What we must *not* do at this point is to assume that a little refurbishing of our educational practice, a few tightenings of nuts and screws, a little reorganization of curricula, or an intravenous injection of the Hutchins' plan, will solve all our problems, for such expedients obscure the basic faults which exist within our principles themselves.

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Of course, these problems which we face are not new. Socrates found indications in his time that students were given "only the pretense of wisdom; they will be hearers of many things and will have learned nothing; they will appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing; they will be tiresome, having the reputation of knowledge without the reality."<sup>11</sup> Surely we have by now come to the point where mere accumulation of knowledge is no longer our *prime* need, and unless we can somehow place our efforts within a larger context of value and of meaning it will in the ultimate analysis be quite irrelevant whether or not we continue to build up stockpiles of learning. Like money, knowledge is not an end in itself, and although it makes an excellent servant, it is an impossible master.

In criticizing a situation in which objectivity is a cult, in which information is at the center, in which the accumulation of knowledge is the current coin in education, the Christian scholar will not, and indeed cannot, deny the importance of an intimate and well grounded familiarity with the factual matter necessary to the mastery of any field. Nor need he necessarily criticize the increasing emphasis on vocational education. We know, all of us, that higher education is equipped to prepare students for earning a livelihood, and that surely is no small or evil thing. What higher education is generally unprepared to do, and what it is far too often uninterested in doing, is to prepare students for living on a high and humane plane of existence. It is to this failure that the Christian scholar must point in protest, and it is to this problem that he must direct his attention.

The solution will not come in terms of easy nostrums. We cannot take refuge in such authoritarian clichés as are peddled under the euphemism "academic freedom" by the educational association of a certain church body which has declared that "Academic freedom is freedom to teach what is true and to receive instruction in what is true." In contradistinction to this position, the Christian faculty movement proposes no academic strait jacket, no prohibition of thought and inquiry. Indeed, I will strongly maintain that the intellectual who stands in the enfranchising tradition of Protestant Christianity cannot propose any such academic program. It is only by violating his own doctrinal standards that he can advocate the overthrow of basic freedom, whether in the state or in the academy. John Milton was the first prominent Protestant thinker to realize the full implications of this fact, and he expressed it in an impassioned and unforgettable way. Of the Presbyterians in the Puritan regime, he said: "I wish them, earnestly and calmly, not to fall off from their first principles, nor to affect rigor and superiority over men not under them; nor to compel unforceable things, in religion especially, which, if not voluntary, becomes a sin." According to Milton, Protestants must consider "that if it come to prohibiting, there is not aught more likely to be prohibited than truth itself, whose first appearance to our eyes bleared and dimmed with prejudice and custom, is more unsightly and unpalatable than many errors."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Plato, *Phaedrus* in Jowett's ed. *The Works* (New York: Dial, n.d.), III, 443.

<sup>12</sup>John Milton, *Prose Selections* (ed. Merritt Y. Hughes, New York: Odyssey, 1947), pp. 313 and 264-65, from *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* and *Areopagitica*, respectively.



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In his excellent essay on the relationships between democratic freedom and theological doctrine, an essay which is particularly pertinent to academic freedom, to free intellectual expression and to the free pursuit of truth, Professor Winthrop Hudson writes:

It would seem no mere coincidence that modern democracy—with its checks and balances and its insistence upon minority rights—arose and put down its deepest roots in lands most influenced by the Reformed faith—in England, Scotland, Holland, Switzerland, the United States, and the British Dominions. It would also seem to be no mere coincidence that it is largely only within these lands that democracy has been able to offer effective resistance to the totalitarian revolutions of the twentieth century.

Hudson then enquires as to the "indispensable theological bases" of freedom, and concludes that freedom as we "understand it in America was derived from the three theological doctrines of the sovereignty of God, human bondage to sin, and a particular understanding of the way in which the implications of revelation are made known and confirmed."<sup>13</sup> The doctrine of original sin, for example, leads to the "proposition that all earthly power must be limited, because earthly power is forever subject to the temptation to exalt itself in rebellion against God and the common good." Indeed, "in the Protestant understanding of the divine economy, no mortal man and no earthly institution is infallible, and any attempts to absolutize the fallible can only be interpreted as idolatry." Such doctrines moved the men who held them in the direction of freedom, however slow the movement may have been, and at times it was exceedingly slow. It was, however, steady: "The only way in which divine truth, either in Scripture or in nature, could be confirmed and its implications for the common life could be ascertained was through unfettered discussion. 'We have a proverb,' declared one of the early Puritan manifestoes, 'that they that will find must as well seek where a thing is not, as where it is.'"<sup>14</sup>

These views, as described by Professor Hudson and as proclaimed by Milton and others, are an integral part of the common belief of Protestants, and I doubt that any reputable Protestant thinker today would deny them. So long as a Protestant Christian scholar is loyal to his own doctrinal position, he can never deny the basic exercise of intellectual freedom. Of course, given the inherent evil of human nature, we know that intolerance will arise under any system of thought, Christian or otherwise, but no other contemporary system so clearly guards itself against the suppression of individual rights as does Protestantism. There is good reason to feel that it is only in terms of such a system that democratic—and academic—freedom can be guarded against the tyranny of majority conformity. A mere relativism, a "pure" liberalism alone is not enough to secure freedom, academic or otherwise. In this age of new totalitarian idolatries abroad and at home, we would do well to pray Peter Marshall's prayer, "Lord, give us the strength to stand for something, lest we fall for everything." It is the task of the intellectual, under God, to arrive at an under-

<sup>13</sup>Winthrop Hudson, "Theological Convictions and Democratic Government," *Theology Today*, X (July, 1953), 231.

<sup>14</sup>Hudson, pp. 233 and 236.

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standing of at least some of the great and timeless things for which we should stand.

And it must be clear that all great and timeless things are not the exclusive possession of the Christian tradition; nor can we ignore the truth which is discovered or proclaimed by non-Christians, or even by anti-Christians. As believers in an omnipotent and omniscient God, we must acknowledge that all truth is orthodox, that there is no heresy in truth, and that to attack or ignore truth wherever it is found is to despise God. John Calvin gave forceful expression to this important fact:

So oft therefore as we light upon profane writers, let us be put in mind by that marvelous light of truth that shineth in them, that the mind of man, how much so ever it be perverted and fallen from the first integrity, is yet still clothed and garnished with excellent gifts of God. If we consider that the spirit of God is the only fountain of truth, we will neither refuse nor despise the truth itself, wheresoever it shall appear, except we will dishonorably use the Spirit of God: for the gifts of the Holy Ghost cannot be set light by, without contempt and reproach of Himself.<sup>15</sup>

The honest pursuit of truth is in itself an homage to God through the receipt of common grace and the outworking of natural revelation, and cannot be violated without dishonor to God, for all truth is His, not ours. The Christian scholar, so long as he is true to his faith, cannot take refuge in a cloud of obscurantism. His vocation may be merely to pursue and transmit the truth available to him through his special skills, without direct reference to Christian doctrine—it seems impossible, for example, to conceive of any such thing as a distinctively Christian formula in physics—and such exclusive attention to the natural order is surely a high and honorable vocation within the Christian commitment.

But Christian intellectuals may go further, and within the Christian faculty movement some surely should go further. While we must all defend the position of a Christian scholar who holds that Christian thought and certain areas of his scholarly inquiry constitute incompatible universes of inquiry, and while we must never countenance any attempt to "doctor" or warp investigation in favor of supposedly Christian conclusions, we will also agree, I presume, that the great intellectual hope of our age lies in the re-formulation of a generally unified understanding of existence.

Einstein once remarked that the presence of two unrelated structurings of reality was "intolerable to the theoretical spirit."<sup>16</sup> It may also be intolerable to society and to the sane existence of the individual within society. In our largely post-Christian world, we live today in a pluriverse of confusions and frustrations. We have no map of reality by which to chart our course, no structure of values by which to judge our actions and our goals, no all-encompassing landscape of reality in terms of which we live and move and have our being.

<sup>15</sup>John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Thomas Norton, 2.2.15. This is the Elizabethan translation, done by one of the fathers of the Elizabethan drama, and is literally far superior to the other English versions of the *Institutes*.

<sup>16</sup>Barnett, p. 119.

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No single intellect can lead us out of this maze. The synthesis of a single mind, such as that of Thomas Aquinas, is impossible even if it were desirable, which it probably is not, for we no longer have even the possibility of a neat synthetic approach, after the fashion of earlier times. Perhaps the use of the word "synthesis" itself is inappropriate in discussing the avenues open to us. Surely no nice categorical pigeonholing is available in our time. It may be that our most promising opportunities for structuring existence and experience lie in the areas of method, in more or less clearly indicating the modes of wayfaring appropriate to the various goals of human endeavor, and in setting these within a single landscape of truth. At all events, an intelligible structuring of reality is still possible, is still at the very least desirable if not imperative, and it is here, I suggest, that we see the greatest opportunities of the Christian faculty movement. What one man can no longer attain, many men working together may achieve. What is no longer possible within the bounds of one subject area — such as philosophy or theology — may be available within many. Competent Christian thinkers representing the variety of approaches to and understandings of truth which are appropriate to its various domains may in joint exploration and endeavor chart anew the areas of human relevance, and do so in terms of perennial Christian verity. This goal cannot be reached by theologians alone — and most emphatically it cannot be reached without theologians. The task must be the joint effort of theologians together with other specialists who have attained a mature if not professional understanding of the central patterns of Christian thought and life.

Several things will be necessary if contemporary thought is to be honestly and effectually restored to a Christian frame of reference. First of all, we will not be concerned with that "preservation of obsolete equipment in the most up to date fashion" for which an army ordinance officer was recently awarded a citation of merit, and our understanding of the historic Christian evangel must be in terms of the best tools and conclusions which are available to us in our own time. Surely, too, there must be an extensive acquaintance with the full reaches of Christian doctrine, not the narrow and individualistic fragmentation of that doctrine into cheap, sterilized and self-righteous packages. In other words, there must be an intelligent and sensitive awareness of the wholeness and integrity of the Christian convictions as to life and salvation. At the same time there must be unimpeachable integrity and scholarly competence. A group of scholars and theologians marked with such honesty, competence and Christian understanding, can restore our culture to sanity, finding in historic Christianity the unifying and vitalizing force.

Surely no such effort as I am outlining, even in the highest possible reaches of success, could present man with a ready-made capsule of saving faith. The great Protestant reformers distinguished between cognitive and saving faith. They treated cognitive faith as that which even the devils may have and tremble, while saving faith was defined in terms of a justifying relationship to God which Luther called "a sure trust and confidence of the heart,"<sup>17</sup> and which Cranmer described as "a sure trust

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and confidence in God's merciful promises . . . whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments."<sup>18</sup> Such saving faith is not in the hands of man to give or to withhold, but can come only as acceptance of the free gift of God's grace. What I refer to as the tenable structuring of thought and enquiry in Christian terms cannot offer such faith, unless it prostitute itself into a respectable brand of intellectual idol worship, and then it will offer merely a snare and a delusion.

Nor can a company of Christian scholars, even on the most exalted intellectual and spiritual planes of effort, ever telescope the mind of God within the compass of hand and eye. What I suggest, then, as possible of attainment is neither the merchandising of a faith which falsely purports to save nor a shamanistic comprehension of the incomprehensible; it is rather the restoration of the Christian *perspective* to all areas of modern life, the recharting of the *landscape of reality* in Christian terms intelligible to our age. As culture and language change from age to age, so too must the statement and application of the Christian evangel change, if it is to communicate. The high agnosticism of faith remains—I cannot force upon myself "a sure trust and confidence in God's merciful promises" and I cannot adequately define the God who has made Himself open to me, but then neither can I on a much lower level define poetry with any adequacy, though I teach it every day. And yet I must have some limited working hypothesis on which I can act, some understandable approximation of the truth in order to think in any but a futile and nebulous way.

What is attainable in our age is the re-application to the varied areas of human thought and inquiry of an approximation of God's total truth, and that is a great deal more than we now have in our current frustrated idolatry before our own particular navels. A company of Christian scholars, scientists and theologians working in integrity and humility may again make accessible to our age in all of its multiple facets the eternal truth of our Lord and so supplant the host of partial gods who preside over our cultural life, even though it is impossible for us as mere men to enthrone the true God in the hearts of our fellows.

The climate of intellectual opinion in our day is far more susceptible to the Christian view of life than it has been for some two centuries or more, and this is in large part because we have seen the shattering of our illusions of human illimitability and have generally come to think of our achievements in terms of successive approximations to truth rather than as ultimate seizures upon truth. James B. Conant typifies the new attitude when he refers to scientific achievement not in terms of the old attainment of absolute certainty but rather in terms of the contribution of "new broad concepts," of "working hypotheses on a grand scale," and Einstein has spoken of "a consistent isomorphic representation" of events and relationships as "the maximal possibility" of man's knowledge.<sup>19</sup> Surely this position is consistent with the Christian view of seeing through a glass darkly, and just

<sup>17</sup>Martin Luther, *Commentary upon Galatians*, 2.16a.

<sup>18</sup>Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, *Works* (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1846), II, 133.

<sup>19</sup>Conant, p. 129, and Barnett, p. 126.

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as surely the command of our Lord to do His will and then know of the doctrine whether it be true represents a directive intelligible to a generation of men schooled in the testing of hypothesis by event and experience. Christian patterns of life and of thought do cover the data of experience, do render that data intelligible and, within limits, manageable.

The things of our intellectual culture are no more to be repudiated than they are to be idolatrized; simple repudiation is not the process of Christianity, for in Christianity the old things are not simply to be destroyed, but are to be made new again in the service of our Lord. George MacLeod, leader of the Iona Community within the Church of Scotland, puts it that "we do not deal with new things instead of old things; but with the old things in a new way: indeed all the old 'things' now take on a sacramental significance."<sup>20</sup> I am convinced that in our time, in the providence of God, a new way is opened before us, and a new challenge laid upon the Church, the challenge of a communal venture towards Christian renaissance in the life of the mind. The task is not one for the single discursive individualist; it is a task which can be accomplished only in and through the Christian community, with lay and theological scholars working together for the restoration, through the Christian perspective, of health and sanity within our culture.

In this realm we cannot deal in synthetic absolutes, nor could we restore theocracy even if we wished to do so. What John Baillie has referred to as a closed Christian civilization is neither attainable nor desirable; but we may achieve an "open" Christian culture; we may, in community, achieve the restoration of what our fathers called "diffused Christianity," a genuinely acceptable working hypothesis undergirding and uniting all of man's life and intellectual endeavor. We may again attain to what H. G. Wells described as "The Salvation of Learning by Christianity." That, I suggest, should constitute the ultimate objective of the Christian faculty movement.

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<sup>20</sup>George MacLeod, *We Shall Rebuild* (Glasgow, n.d.), p. 54.



## The Commitments and Tensions of Academic Men

CLYDE A. HOLBROOK



HIS ARTICLE MAY EXHIBIT a firm grasp of the obvious. But the obvious, if it be true and relevant, should not go by default. To those who have for some years lived in the purlieu of the academic, this analysis will lack novelty and perhaps even cogency. I have therefore mollified my conscience by the strategem of addressing myself primarily to the new teacher, the novice who may have only recently become enmeshed in the college scene.

Undergirding all that may be said of the various academic groupings to which the Christian instructor pledges allegiance, there lies his commitment to the God who has called him to teach, who has given him a vocation, not simply a profession.<sup>2</sup> In the concrete tasks of his calling, God is seen as laying his claim upon the life of the teacher, and by His grace, furnishing forgiveness and strength to accomplish in some measure the claims He enjoins. Our specific tasks take their normative perspective not from our private insights and interests, nor solely from our culture, but from the recognition that our life in all its manifestations is grounded ultimately in Him who is Creator, Judge, and Redeemer. Thus the Christian vocation of teaching is one in which the teacher is called to glorify God by reflecting, all too often quite brokenly, to his colleagues and students the creative, sustaining, discriminating yet redemptive power by virtue of which he lives. He has his existence as one, therefore, for whom the enlarging experience of the mystery and sublimity of existence is not sacrificed to the neat finalities of the human mind, nor the rigorous demands of concrete experience and reason surrendered to sentimental religiosity. To point beyond oneself, one's vocation, and one's field of intellectual inquiry, to the One who is the ground of their being and value is the supreme task of the Christian academic man. For his vocation is the opportunity to do a systematic, purposive, and needful work whereby God is served in the service of man.<sup>3</sup> Teaching, therefore, is to be regarded primarily as a Christian calling rather than an art, a profession, a technique, or a job.

The vocation is structured by three principal communities or groups to which the teacher explicitly or implicitly commits himself. These are the academic community at large, the professional community, and the college community. These groups, if they do not completely define the content of the Christian vocation, at least give substance to it. They are not necessarily consonant with each other in the demands they lay upon the academic man. Inevitable conflicts occur among the multiple claims which each makes, yet mutual reinforcement is discovered also. The

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<sup>2</sup>Cf. W. R. Forrester, *Christian Vocation*, (London, Lutterworth Press, 1951), pp. 15 ff.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. R. L. Calhoun, *God and the Common Life*, (Scribner's, 1935), pp. 54-72.

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Christian teacher must make some viable adjudication of these claims and some significant use of whatever compatibilities can be found. This essay is an attempt to sketch the nature and character of these interlocking, yet often rival commitments into which the Christian teacher enters.

The academic community in its deepest sense is composed of those who have a love of learning and accurate scholarship. They are those who from earliest times have studied, experimented, interpreted, and evaluated what passes for knowledge. Their inquiries and meditations have searched the ways of nature, man, and God. No organization has been formed; no arbitrary limit is set to membership in this community, and no degree admits one to its fellowship. An unquenchable yearning, not only for knowledge, but wisdom, and a disciplined sensitivity of mind and spirit are alone prerequisite. No college, professional, or vocational group exhaustively expresses this community. Yet the underlying purpose and nurture of these derives from the academic community. Nevertheless, the academic community is not a purely disincarnate fellowship held only in memory and imagination. It becomes flesh and blood whenever scholars band together in groups and colleges to work at the task of learning.

In entering into the life of the mind and spirit one also passes, perhaps by imperceptible steps, into this community. One becomes aware that he has assumed an obligation to a fellowship, the members of which have lived in other years as well as the present, in other regions as well as one's own culture. Further, it becomes clear that there are certain habits of mind and spirit which are the standards of excellence for this community, and which form the conditions of membership therein: diligence rather than sloth, integrity of character, fairmindedness to the scholarship of others, a sense of modesty as to one's own ignorance, and the courage to stand for the truth as one sees it. Under such mandates as these, the academic man pronounces himself the enemy of all humbug, cheap tricks of the trade, and dogmatic narrowness. He is pledged to an achievement beyond that which any college demands. He lives often with the tension of his obligation to this farflung community set over against the more immediate claims of his role as a teacher. He studies and teaches not for the moment, not even solely for the benefit of the present student generation. He has a stake in preserving, interpreting, evaluating, and enriching a heritage for years to come. And by this recognition he is himself partially redeemed from that intellectual isolation which present interests, college responsibilities and his own field of study often press upon him.

If we seriously believe that God intends men to move out of ignorance, prejudice and superstition, then our commitment to the academic community is clearly a central element in our vocation. Through this commitment God lays his claim specifically upon us to broaden the horizons of thought, to operate with the painstaking discrimination in our field of study, and to maintain an openness to insight from diverse sources. Seen in the light of God's will to mutuality, the academic



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community becomes a deeply felt dialogue of minds wherein each is fulfilled by his participation in the life and thought of others.

The professional community takes on a more tangible form, though not necessarily a more significant one than the academic group. But responsibilities are more clearly and pressingly defined in this context. By virtue of his status, the academic man stands committed, both as teacher and scholar, to those organizations which foster the technical operations of both areas. He is expected to participate in the "professional societies" of his field to discover what methods are being used by others in research and instruction, what areas of the field are most "alive," and to meet those who are carrying on work in these areas.

However, not all of one's obligations to the professional community are fulfilled in such participation, inclusive of making scholarly contributions to one's society. There are broader gauged professional groups which represent the professional community. These cut across departmental interests, and potentially open the way for intellectual and spiritual cross-fertilization. The Council of Learned Societies, Phi Beta Kappa, Faculty Christian Fellowship, the work of agencies such as the Danforth and Hazen Foundations, and the National Council on Religion in Higher Education, groups studying general education and entrance with advanced standing, are typical of this aspect of the professional community. Obviously, one cannot participate to the maximum in both types, yet where shall the line be drawn?

Another focus of the professional community is represented by the American Association of University Professors. Here the problems of the profession often are confronted at a practical level. What of faculty status, academic freedom, salary scale, tenure, and retirement locally and nationally? These are issues which are not to be loftily relegated to the limbo of the inconsequential and undignified. One has a responsibility to fellow teachers on the basis of equity at least to preserve the freedom of the academic profession, and to guarantee suitable "working conditions" for the profession. The Christian academic man not only has a private stake in the queries mentioned above, but again he is bound to the whole fraternity of teachers as his brother's keeper. And this responsibility means that time and effort must be expanded in meetings and studies on these matters. And there is, in some cases, danger to one's own position in becoming embroiled in these questions. Is one to be branded as a trouble-maker on the faculty? As one who does not stick to his main job of teaching? As one who promotes dangerous doctrines under cover of academic freedom? Again the Christian academician is committed to a community from whose orbit there is no appeal short of irresponsibility.

The Christian teacher's relation to the college community is a complex one, as it includes commitments to the college as a whole, the administration, the faculty, and the students. Nor are these commanding loyalties easily unified and ordered by some abstract hierarchical principle.

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The first of these, the relation to the college as a whole, is a somewhat amorphous relation. Each college is a living entity. It has a history, traditions, an image of itself, and a prevailing climate of opinion and sentiment. It stretches back to founders and their aims; it reaches forward through its alumni into the future. It has accepted methods of going about its affairs. It has problems of defining its growing nature and purpose. Into this atmosphere the teacher comes.

Some are exceptionally quick to catch the mood and tempo of a college; others are slow to do so or even openly antagonistic to the institution. Some quickly attach their loyalties to the college; while others spend a lifetime being unhappy.

Therefore, it seems good sense for the teacher, before signing a contract, to learn as much about the college as possible. What is the prevailing campus atmosphere? What conception or image do the interpreters of the college present? Does it agree with what you know of it and its graduates? What kind of people are its alumni? Are they loyal to the college, supporting it by gifts and sending their children there? Is there a high rate of turnover in the faculty? If so, why? Is the atmosphere conducive to the intellectual enterprise? How seriously does it take its religious responsibilities? Is the town or city one in which your family is likely to be happy? With what information you can secure, do you believe this campus offers opportunity for you to throw yourself with good conscience into its work?

The importance of these questions is difficult to overstate, for once the professor is "hired," he has factually assumed a share of the total responsibility for college life. Yet it is a responsibility directly assumed in respect to neither the administration, faculty, nor students. Rather it seems to be pointed once more toward the academic community, except that the life of a college is not strictly an academic life. There is the social climate which is irreducible to the academic as such, and yet forms an important element in the whole. The professor is a living member in that climate, and is bound to it in its peculiar qualities as exhibited on a particular campus.

Tensions in this area are not slow to show themselves. For example, there may be deeply felt differences concerning policy or the interpretations of the college's purpose as offered usually by the administration or trustees. There is a tendency for the latter group to identify its pronouncements with the welfare and aim of the college community, whereas the faculty members, with equal intensity, in the name of tradition or their understanding of the college's purpose, may dissent vigorously.

Does disagreement with and criticism of administration policy signify disloyalty to the college? Some administrators will interpret such action as "insubordination" and "breaking the chain of command" (as one college president liked to put it!) With the presumption of loyalty to the college which any administration has the right to expect of a faculty member, certainly it becomes difficult for the professor to discriminate between loyalty to the college as such and loyalty to the official spokesmen of the institution. Commitment to the college community as such does involve commitment to the administration, faculty, and students, and it is

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difficult to assess the balance among these components, without weighing one too heavily. But if one cannot honestly give oneself to the particular pattern of college life in these respects (or effect some workable relation among them) it is wise to move on.

The commitment to the administration lies somewhere between devotion to the academic community and the college community on the one hand, and faculty and student communities on the other. The most pertinent observation to be made is that the faculty exists to teach and to carry out research, and the administration exists to enable the faculty to perform this central task. There is distinction in function, and in most cases the ideal is that of cooperation between faculty and administration without overlapping of their functions. Yet this ideal is seldom realized.

There is usually an authority vested in the administration, which the faculty does not have. Certain members of the administration hold the keys to promotion, salary increase, dismissal, recommendation, and tenure. Hence the ideal of cooperation is usually weighted to the advantage of the administration. The faculty member, realizing this, is again caught in tension between his other commitments and his commitment to the administration. Often an implicit, if not explicit "class warfare" is lurking around the corner. There is a power struggle involved, which suggests to the Christian teacher the need for the recognition of "sin" in himself as well as others. The search for a favorable position in the eyes of the administration, often at the expense of both the academic community and the faculty community, is no stranger to the campus. The feelings of insecurity and jealousy are common as faculty members face the administration, and resort to either a syncophantic technique or enter into faculty intrigues for the discomfiture of the administration.

It is not difficult to add to the list of possibilities for tensions along the faculty-administration axis. Some of the more familiar ones to be met are the following: the administration cares about the institution, the individual faculty will be sacrificed to the institution; the administration in meeting the public, parents, alumni, prospective donors, is apt to present a picture of harmony and equity within the college which does not exist; the administration fears public opinion, and will soft-pedal controversial issues on campus; disproportionate accounts of the college budget go for administrative assistants, filing cabinets, secretaries, office space, and dictaphone machine while the faculty member has to get along on a meager salary and do his own office work; administrations favor certain departments over others, producing ill-will among the departments; administrations listen to students but not to faculty members. And the list of grievances, real or fancied, can be expanded.

What is the Christian faculty member to do? Hold aloof from these disagreements? Follow the administration line or the faculty line—if there is either! Does he become a campus ward-heeler, or does he draw up into an ivory tower? There is an understanding assumed that he will work with and not against the ad-

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ministration, so far as possible. Again no facile solutions can be proposed. There are important issues at stake in some of these intramural quarrels, and the Christian academic man is called upon to bear his witness sensitively and courageously. Perhaps in line with his Christian commitment, the faculty member should work with those forces which attempt to open lines of communication between the differing parties. He brings under judgment the self-righteousness of both administration and faculty, and strives to facilitate community based on justice wherever possible. He may at least assist in establishing an atmosphere in which these tensions, in which he also participates, can be worked on intelligently without undue bitterness. And it can be added that often this is a thankless and misunderstood role to play. But in so acting, he may at least mitigate the tendency by which issues get tangled up with persons.

A similar counsel applies to the faculty member's relation to his colleagues. Again, he has entered into an unwritten compact with his peers. And what are some of the implications of this commitment?

Teachers owe each other a bond of mutual loyalty by virtue of the common task in which they participate. This value, obviously, is not uniquely Christian, but the Christian academic man may more keenly feel the obligation and opportunity for a community of loyalty and openness to each other than others.

Although it may appear to be a trivial point, respect for the selfhood of one's colleagues is difficult to enact. This is not necessarily friendship so much as awareness of the authority of the person who stands with and against one. Therefore, we do not break our fidelity and the possibility of free encounter with the other by gossip or derogatory remarks about others in the presence of faculty members, students, and administration. The building up of oneself to a position of authority and prestige by the demolition of others is, whether successful or not, a breach of that commitment by which God has given us our colleague as "our neighbor." Yet we do form opinions of the personality and competence of fellow faculty members. We may indeed by virtue of moral and/or official responsibilities be called upon to judge another. This cannot be shirked; neither can we avoid the realization that we too are under a judgment in our judgment of others.

In addition, it should scarcely have to be mentioned that we have also tacitly entered into a miscellany of vocational practices which comprise the common stock of the faculty status: shunning of laziness in academic work, insistence upon freedom for research and teaching, willingness to spend a fair amount of time on committees, the refusal to curry student favor by underhanded methods, loyalty to the department without imperialistic or provincial design, and the formation of friendship wherever opportunity affords.

As a teacher, the most pressing commitment one has is to one's students. Our Christian vocation comes to even sharper focus at this point, for here the Christian knows that God through these students lays a unique demand upon the teacher's

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life. The teacher is the initiator of the student into a world of knowledge and values; he is the critic of the inevitable limitations and distortions in the student mind; he is in some degree the master of the destiny of the student by the grades he awards and the recommendations he writes; he is the one who invites or seduces the student into active appreciation, curiosity, and wonder at the range of mystery which permeates and surrounds the body of established human knowledge. The teacher is both the pedagogue who takes the student by the hand to lead him forth from uncritical awareness to critical self-awareness, and the awesome figure who stands athwart the passage to dispute it with him. To the student mind the professor is many persons in one—sometimes enigmatic and threatening, sometimes open and engaging.

How then shall we describe the teacher's responsibility to the student? One way would be to recite those basal qualities which should be found in any good teacher. But these have often been spelled out, as for example in Dr. K. I. Brown's "Not Minds Alone." Yet at the risk of tramping over familiar ground, let me, nevertheless, proceed to suggest some additional qualities which seem to me to help round out the qualities needful for fulfilling the Christian's commitment to the student group.

First of all, a good teacher is one who has learned to balance his emphasis between the demands laid upon him by the field in which he teaches and the student as a person, with his unique capacities, interests and inner problems. Presumably the student cannot be considered educated without mastery in fairly concise terms of the field in which he teaches. As Whitehead has remarked, "A certain ruthless definition is essential to education. I am sure," he continued, "that one secret of a successful teacher is that he has formulated quite clearly in his mind what the pupil has got to know in precise fashion."<sup>4</sup> So much seems unquestionable. However, if the teacher becomes so attached to his field and its problems that he interprets virtually all experience in terms of it, he may well do an injustice to the growing minds of his students. His aim may be to cover as much material as possible, letting the educational chips fall where they may, with subsequent loss of interest and achievement on the part of the student.

The opposite danger arises from an extravagant solicitude about the student as such. In this direction lies the possibility of a miasma of sentimentality in which the obdurate structure of humane culture and knowledge is obscured. I for one would much prefer, for example, to be treated by a doctor who had thoroughly learned anatomy, chemistry, and surgery than one who had a marvelously well developed and adjusted personality, achieved by his continuous presence at smokers and hot toddy parties, or religious group meetings.

Hence the teacher should be one who has developed that kind of integrity which holds in balance both the requirements of his field and the needs of the student as a person.

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<sup>4</sup>A. N. Whitehead, *Aims of Education*, (Mentor, 1949), p. 47.



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In the next place, there is the necessity of two closely joined qualities in the teacher, the qualities of imagination and transparency. With Whitehead we may say, "The whole art in the organization of a university is the provision of a faculty whose learning is lighted up with imagination."<sup>5</sup> Freshness in knowledge as the professor treats it helps the student feel that he or the instructor, maybe both, have discovered an insight for the first time. The student senses that even the most ancient truths are alive, are of immediate importance and eventual significance.

Seldom is imagination developed by the graduate school with its emphasis upon rigorous discipline, research, dredging for "facts," and lack of free speculation. Some of us by native disposition are possessed of greater imagination than others, but none of us needs be totally lacking in it. We can train ourselves by more or less self-conscious attempts, such as seeking from time to time the connections between our fields and others, the lines of common or diverse interpretation and evaluation between them, by reaching out for an intellectual vision of human experience which will broaden the horizon of our own specialties and give perspective to them, or by the quest for the underlying motifs or presuppositions which give validity to the superstructures reared upon them.

But imagination refers also to the student as such. Can we in memory hold before ourselves a conception of what it felt like to be a college student? How did we feel and think? From personal consultation with students, we may catch the spirit of the present generation. Thereby there may be developed that sympathetic and imaginative insight which enables us to cast our teaching in a framework consonant with their outlook. By the same token we can do something to break down that impersonalism which our role as teacher rears between us and our students. Knowledge and education are not true to their deepest possibilities unless they engender such enthusiasm for themselves as will lead to self-education. And this is impossible without imagination.

Closely allied with imagination — perhaps as one of its consequences — is the quality of transparency. In our attachment to the rationalistic hypothesis and what is called common sense, truth is often identified with clarity. I am convinced that such an identification leads only to a falsification of the true complexity of reality as man finds it, and offers to him only truncated, neat schemata of experience, which daily experience refutes. Therefore simple clarity should not be identified with transparency, for the latter term, as here used, operates by what Robert Ulich describes as allowing the larger context to shine through any segment of subject matter.<sup>6</sup>

The Christian teacher believes there is an encompassing framework of reality within which his work is set. This ultimate context, known to us by the pathos, tragedy, and comedy of human experience, by the sense of wholeness within which

<sup>5</sup>Whitehead, *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup>Robert Ulich, *Teaching Religion in Higher Education* (Ronald Press, 1951), p. 54.

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we live and think, by our deepest moral and religious intuitions, is at last the mystery against which our living and our thinking is projected. It is this reality, standing over against us, which raises the questions of ultimate concern to each of us, for it implicitly confronts us with both our limitations as persons and our possibility. In recognition of both our dependence upon it or Him and our separation from this source of our being, the crucial question of our life's meaning arises. It is face to face with this reality that we attempt seriously to answer that question for ourselves.

Whether we call it imagination, transparency, or sensitivity may matter little. The essential factor is that Christian teaching not rob the student of the opportunity of raising the question of his own nature and meaning in this most ultimate context, that his learning not proceed without some sense of the inexhaustible richness of experience in confrontation with the divine or that he be prevented from seeing the infinite and eternal impinge upon or radiate through the particular and concrete. Great teaching is existential teaching where through the segments of human knowledge the overtones of ultimacy are heard, and the answers to life's meaning are given in responsible decision. As Nathaniel Micklem expresses this quality of transparency:

Man little knows, and this but knows in part,  
Not his the strength to grasp the plenitude  
Of any truth, too circumscribed his heart,  
Too frail his intellect; and yet the crude  
Constructions of his thought may be bright hued  
With intimations of the Infinite  
And Ultimate, may bring a certitude,  
Not that his eyes can bear Truth's very sight,  
But that her saving beams have set his thoughts alight.<sup>7</sup>

There is another quality through which the Christian teacher fulfills his vocation in relation to students—and that is humility. There is the ever present danger of turning into a spouting oracle before students, especially the less perceptive ones. The first time a group of students gathers about one's feet in the living room can be a fairly heady experience. A picture of thirsty, trusting little minds awaiting the precious drops of your wisdom is conjured up—and one sees oneself in a quite inspiring light.

Humility may come home to us in many ways, as when we realize quite justly how little we know, how poorly we measure up to our colleagues, how sadly we have failed our students, or it may come to us by remembering our difficulties in pressing through the academic world to reach this vantage point of "teacher." But above all, true humility derives from knowing that one is always before God, before whom there is no possibility of evasion or pretense. To know that the truth about oneself is known by another, however, is a source of strength, since no pose

<sup>7</sup>Nathaniel Micklem in *Theology Today*, July, 1954, p. 190.



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must be maintained, or hokum excused or defended. One's powers may be forthrightly directed to more important matters. It is a source of serenity and poise, for once the lesson is learned—and it must be continuously re-learned—humility does not constantly fear being tumbled from the posture of assumed preeminence. As Whitehead put it, "It should be the chief aim of a university professor to exhibit himself in his own true character—that is, as an ignorant man thinking, actively utilizing this small share of knowledge."<sup>8</sup>

Humility, among other things, implies the absence of dogmatism and attempted indoctrination in the classroom as well as a consistent teachableness in the instructor himself. Too often the critics of the Christian vocation of teaching think of the teacher as one possessed of certain inflexible convictions which he is to impose willy-nilly upon his unsuspecting students. But Professor Thomas is certainly right when he states that, "Anyone who attempts to force students to accept his own convictions by rewarding those who agree and penalizing those who disagree with him serves the ends neither of spiritual religion nor of liberal education."<sup>9</sup> Good sense, as well as Christian humility, would seem to dictate that such behavior is a misuse of the classroom.

However, it is also worthwhile to note that the college campus is filled with dogmatisms, many explicitly opposed to Christian faith, and these, no less than Christian dogmas, should be called into question by the Christian teacher. Humility does not mean acquiescence in error or partial truth. And it is also important to realize that the teacher's convictions can be placed before a class in such a way as to invite the student to fight his way through or around them. This can be a productive educational technique. There is a vast difference between dogmatism in a narrow and unyielding sense of mental conformity, and a confession, fully and freely expressed, inviting the frankest possible discussion. Humility allows for this, for it allows the insight of others to have their play; it permits of patience to stay with the student while he grows, and it thereby impregnates the learning process with an honesty and integrity without which knowledge becomes amoral or at best purely technical.

Our observations to this point have dealt with the teacher as a teacher in respect to the student. Now, in spite of the impressive number of obligations which our commitments lay on the Christian teacher, there are others which concern the teacher's relation to the student outside the classroom. Students live a more or less hidden life of their own which sometimes finds no overt expression in the classroom and study. The role as a student does not exhaust one's meaning as a person any more than the role of teacher expresses all of the teacher. The student needs counsel, friendship, and acceptance as a person beyond as well as in his academic status, and this the Christian teacher is in a position to offer.

<sup>8</sup>Whitehead, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>9</sup>H. N. Fairchild, ed. *Religious Perspectives in College Teaching* (Ronald Press, 1952), p. 27.

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The offer of oneself, in a tactful way, as a counselor, the open house for students to come to talk out their problems and share their interests, the sharing in extra-curricular events and campus life, afford opportunity for rich and satisfying service as a Christian teacher.

There are dangers, of course, in attempting to break the wall between professor and student. A too great dependence of student on professor, the upsetting of one's own home life, the suspicion of other faculty members who see your friendship for students as a low attempt to win student favor, and the frittering away of precious hours which should be spent in study and preparation—all these loom as possibilities, but there are also great rewards in that kind of community which deep sharing brings.

We return now to our point of departure, the commitment of the Christian teacher to the overarching Christian community. This teacher is one who, with all his inadequacies, mediates and reflects what by faith and knowledge he believes God is doing, that is, sustaining, judging, and redeeming man. Thus he knows his life and work, his students and their work, and the entire academic enterprise is undergirded by the synthesizing and dominating power of God. He knows that as others fall under his judgment, so do he and his fellows come before the love and judgment of God. More than once he will leave the classroom with the words "God be merciful to me a sinner" for his ineptness, lack of preparation and insight. But repeatedly he will be lifted from despondency and excessive self-concern by the act of One who out of the tattered remnants of the teacher's partial knowledge and shortcomings weaves a pattern of freshened hope, new energy, and even a modicum of achievement.

# The Christian Professor's Responsibility to His Colleagues

RENE DE VISME WILLIAMSON



HE CONCEPT OF RESPONSIBILITY, as it is employed in political science, is relevant to the university community from both secular and Christian points of view. According to political science you are responsible to whomever has the power to appoint, remove, promote, demote, or instruct you. The official organizational chart of a university shows that it is hierarchical, with a Board of Trustees at the top, a President, Vice-President, Deans in charge of Colleges, Directors in charge of Schools, and Heads or Chairmen in charge of Departments. This is an administrative chain-of-command in which officials at various levels of authority wield extensive powers over academic personnel, finances, discipline, and the curriculum. Beneath this lies the academic hierarchy, ranging from instructor to full professor; but it is a teaching and research body, not a governing body, and the differentiation within it relates to tenure, prestige, and money, rather than power.

Though the structure of the modern university is built like a fascist state (authority from above, discipline from below — a principle enunciated by Hitler), and negates many of the recognized democratic values, the actual operation of the modern university in America is modified by academic customs and democratic attitudes of many of those who are involved in it. Even so, when we ask whether its organization is Christian, the answer has to be in the negative. Hierarchy inclines people to become respectors of persons, which ill befits Christian men and women; hierarchy puts rank above person, when what counts is character, not status; it puts power above service and encourages unseemly competition at the bottom and pride or complacency at the top. The teachings of Jesus with respect to hierarchy are clearly negative: "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. *But so shall it not be among you*: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." (Mark 10:42-44)

What should not be so among us is, nevertheless, so among us university Christian people. What should we do about the contrast? First, we must begin with the recognition that while we are not of this world, we are in it and we must stay in it. We cannot be secessionists either in a medieval sense of being hermits or contemplative monks, or in the modern sense of becoming "lost" in research work or wholly engrossed in teaching. We cannot fulfill our Christian role except by dissolving ourselves in the community. We cannot be rebels who resort to obstruction and non-cooperation, even when reform is slow. Secondly, we must respect the constituted authority, for which Jesus set the example, and which is underscored again

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and again in the New Testament. In addition to giving our respect, we must cooperate by doing all the daily tasks with cheerfulness, patience, sympathetic understanding. We must do this not out of necessity but as a matter of conscience. In this there is the call to perfection — even to the extent of taking this course in dealing with administrators who may not deserve their jobs.

But while the concept of responsibility is relevant to the university both from the secular and Christian points of view, it is also inadequate. It does not encompass the whole range of a professor's academic contacts. The main emphasis in the idea of colleagues is that of equality. When we ask, Who, then, is my colleague? the only answer is: every member of the university, whether he is superior, subordinate, or equal in status. Moreover, the more basic, etymological meaning of responsibility is "response-ability". To be responsible is to be responsive, and to be irresponsible is to be unresponsive. To be responsible is to have the capacity to respond to all colleagues in their variety and diversity. In this view, responsibility includes the idea of obligation — responding in specific and acceptable ways, with something definite and predictable on which other people can depend. Thus, the Christian professor's responsibility is to respond to colleagues in a Christian, or a Christ-like manner.

To determine how Christ would respond to people in the university community is no easy task, but we do know how he reacted to the people of his own time — Pharisees, Samaritans, Sadducees, Romans, Publicans, and Sinners. If we could identify on our campuses those who correspond to the people with whom Christ had dealings, we could without too much trouble determine what our own response as Christians should be. Such a transposition requires a bold effort of imagination and is bound to entail a considerable amount of distortion. I want to warn you, therefore, that the picture I am going to paint is not a true copy of what we have but rather a cartoon which deliberately exaggerates certain elements of truth in the situation for the purpose of bringing them into full view.

Let us begin our cartoon with the Pharisee. Who is he? He is most likely to be a professor in the College of Liberal Arts. He teaches one of the older and thoroughly established disciplines — English literature or mathematics. Subjects like sociology are too recent an addition to the curriculum and therefore a bit suspect. He is a purist who believes in education in a strictly cultural sense and shuns all professional and vocational aspects like a plague. He is for pure science but not applied science. He is for art for art's sake, but commercial art is an abomination in his sight. He holds all the requisite degrees from A.B. to Ph.D., and he has these from irreproachable temples of learning like Harvard and Yale. Honorary degrees he frowns upon. As a good Pharisee he believes that an academic degree, like salvation, is something earned by the performance of very specific acts like the writing and defending of a dissertation. He is always precise, deferential, and discriminating in his use of academic titles like "professor" and "doctor." He is a meticulous observer of the rules of scholarship, insisting that all scholarly works be written in an impersonal objective style and be buttressed by methodological introductions, foot-

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notes, indexes, and bibliographies. For that reason he would probably reject Plato's *Republic* if it were offered to him as a Ph.D. thesis. He is a traditionalist who looks upon academic life as a network of rules to which everyone must conform. He is a specialist who aspires to become an authority in his field, and this causes him to resent administrative work as a worthless diversion of his time and to dislike "integrated" courses and area studies as superficial ventures which carry a man beyond the range of his competence. Like the Pharisee of old, he is inflexible and zealous, a person of narrow sympathies and intense hatreds, a confirmed believer in salvation by the works of the law.

The Samaritan, on the other hand, is an impure breed. He teaches such subjects as merchandizing, insurance, agricultural engineering, poultry husbandry, mountain crafts and potteries. His aim in life is not liberal culture but vocational success. His degrees were obtained from unrefined state universities and *nouveau riche* private professional schools. He is not expected to contribute to the sum total of knowledge in the form of scholarly productions like treatises and monographs but confines himself to remunerative textbooks (preferably for secondary schools which constitute a large lucrative market) and well paid articles in trade journals. Teaching may be a high and poorly paid calling to the Pharisee, but the Samaritan has made "a right good thing" out of it. His courses are packed with materialistically-minded students; legislators and business men see to it that his salary is well above average, he gets fat fees as a consultant, and he is in much demand before civic clubs.

The Sadducee is a Dean, Director, or other university administrator who does no teaching. Because he is usually a former professor and has earned degrees, he is a member of the Chosen People. But the Pharisees don't like him and he is ineligible to AAUP membership. For one thing, any professor who quits teaching and writing to become an administrator is a traitor to the intellect. He is remote from the teacher's viewpoint and has lost all sympathy he may have had at one time for those who work in the classroom. This is shown by the fact that he will not give a professor a promotion or a raise because of the excellence of his teaching performance. For another, he has lost all conception of scholarship. True, he insists that his faculty have the Ph.D. degree, but that is for window-dressing purposes. True, he wants the faculty to be productive scholars, but he does not read what they write and his standard of judgment is exclusively quantitative. Furthermore, he is a collaborationist who is never on the side of the faculty but always on the side of that Roman proconsul or centurion, the President of the University. Finally, like the Sadducees of old, he is worldly. He makes a big salary, travels at university expense, enjoys widespread prestige, and sits on the councils of the mighty. His idea of a good professor is a man who gives no trouble, i.e. who enjoys good health, who does not throw monkey wrenches in faculty meetings, who does not quarrel with his colleagues, who never writes irritating letters to the newspapers or makes public addresses which arouse the wrath of the American Legion or the DAR, who is circumspect enough in his associations not to invite legislative investigations, who



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gets along with his students well enough to have large classes and refrains from putting "impractical" ideas into their heads or offending them with unreasonably low grades.

I need not dwell very long on the Romans. Obviously, they are the Trustees of the University because they meet the two essential qualifications: they are alien and they have sovereignty. They are alien because they are not educators and they do not belong to the university community. They are business men, politicians, lawyers, retired army officers, anything except professors. They are not residents of the university community, they devote only a few days each year to university business, they know nothing about education, and they are short both in knowledge and the love of it. But they are sovereign. Legally speaking, incredible and shocking as it may seem, they *are* the university. If you don't believe it, just try to give money to the university and you will find that you have to make your check payable to the Trustees. This alien sovereignty is as unpopular with academic people as that of the Romans was with the people of Israel. On this point Pharisee and Sadducee are united. To be sure, the Sadducee says "We have no king but Caesar," but then this is because he has to, not because he wants to.

The Publican, of course, handles the money. He is Comptroller, Budget Director, or Treasurer. He is the disagreeable fellow who finds fault with your travel vouchers, cuts your departmental operating budget, puts money into fluorescent lights which ought to have gone into salary raises, disallows requests for new professorships in order to re-landscape the campus, and invents unspeakable parking regulations to which the Faculty must conform. He is not an educator, and neither is he learned. Nevertheless, Pharisees darkly suspect him of using the power of the purse and his influence with the Sadducees to make university policy. It is difficult to accuse him of graft under modern conditions, but faculty people observe with marked displeasure the large salary and the commodious air-conditioned office of the Publican.

The next person to identify is the Sinner. Before we can do so, it is necessary to define sin. This is easy. In the academic community sin is ignorance. There is a proverb among the Gentiles which says that when ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise. In academic Israel this proverb should be re-written to read that when learning is bliss 'tis folly to be ignorant. If this be true, who then is the Sinner on the campus? He is a student, a janitor, or a coach—of course! The student doesn't know much, and the janitor and the coach don't know anything. It is true that the coach is well paid, but he doesn't rate. Besides, who is there who does not recognize that some sinners do flourish?

I shall not try to identify the Harlot.

This completes my picture of the modern American university re-interpreted in terms of the Jewish society in the time of Jesus. Now look at that picture! It reeks with bias, prejudice and ill-will. There is not a kind word for anybody in it.

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We cannot take too much comfort in the fact that I have deliberately distorted and exaggerated it because there is still enough in it to keep us from complacency. I believe that Jesus' reaction to it would be exactly what it was nineteen centuries ago. Listen to the words of Matthew: "But when he saw the multitudes, he was *moved with compassion* on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:36-38)

How is anybody going to change this picture so that it can be something which is good and acceptable in the sight of God? To accomplish this task the first step is to rid ourselves of the spiritual astigmatism which distorts our vision, which prevents us from seeing all the good that exists in the university community. We need some new glasses in order that we might do justice to our colleagues and see in them the elements of greatness they possess, e.g. the hunger and thirst for truth of the Pharisee and his intellectual integrity, the usefulness and warm humanity of the Samaritan, the sense of community responsibility and breadth of interest of the Sadducee, the goodwill and capacity for faith of the Roman, the devotion to duty of the Publican, the desire to learn and willingness to serve of the Sinner. I am too much of a Calvinist to believe that we are going to do any such thing to any significant extent by nature. We shall have to heed and exemplify Paul's admonition to the Philippians: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus . . ." (Philippians 2:5) This is indispensable, for without it we would not recognize a picture of heaven itself if it were shown to us.

The second step is to do something about the original. No new pair of glasses and no camera known to photographers is going to make a junk yard look like the Garden of Eden. Christianity does not enjoin wishful thinking or groundless optimism. Our problem here is to transform what is undoubtedly evil in our picture of the university community into something which is just as undoubtedly good. We cannot do this by tampering with the picture or retouching the negative — for that would be a lie in the other direction — but by transforming the original itself.

Does this look like a stupendous task? Of course. But surely it cannot be more so than that of a small band of twelve ordinary Jewish folk, tucked away in a distant corner of a vast and hostile Roman Empire, who did not enjoy the confidence of their own people and who were under the ban of their own local religious and secular authorities. Our own position in an at least nominally Christian country which respects the civil rights of individuals and in institutions of higher learning in which academic freedom is held in high esteem is infinitely more favorable than that of the original twelve. Indeed, it is so much more favorable that we must beware of overconfidence. We cannot dispense with the sources of strength on which the apostolic church relied.

How did the early church meet the challenge? The first thing to observe is

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that they relied on the power of example and that they worked as a group. The quality of Christian living was revealed in the relations of Christians to each other. The temporal distinctions between Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian, slave and freeman, learned and ignorant, rich and poor were blotted out by the supreme force of Christian fellowship. It was not necessary to abolish slavery as a legal institution. In any event, it was not possible. But the substance of freedom was realized in the church. Just so, we professors can create a faculty Christian fellowship in which hierarchy is ignored, where superior and subordinate are bound together by ties of mutual trust and understanding, where decisions are reached because they are self-evidently the right and wise decisions to make, where the Sadducee does not feel he has to carry the whole administrative burden unaided and unappreciated, where the Pharisee is sympathetic and abandons his proud isolationism to accept the responsibilities of membership in the university community. In this faculty Christian fellowship we can break the lines which separate Pharisee from Samaritan so that each recognizes that every subject is interesting or can be made so, that liberal education need not be useless and professional education can become a cultural asset, that thinking minds are to be found in every unit and department of the university. Publicans and Sinners, too, can find their place in it. These people are too often strangers to the faculty.

As members of the university community gather together as Christians to deepen their knowledge of their religion through group study and to broaden their intellectual horizon through group discussion of their respective fields, they will discover the truth of Paul's saying: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. . ." (Ephesians 2:9) Even students, probably led by that neglected go-between, the graduate student, will not feel out of place in a group in which everyone seeks to learn and everyone is an ignoramus in at least several of the fields represented.

The witnessing power of such a fellowship would be tremendous. When a single individual exemplifies the ability to respond to people and situations in a Christ-like manner, someone is sure to say that he is unique, a lone exception which proves the rule. But when that kind of response becomes the hallmark of a whole group, it is not easy to dismiss it in this cavalier fashion. When those on the outside have before their eyes an entire community, however small, in which the prejudices, anxieties, barriers, frustrations, and tensions of the average academic man are non-existent, they will take notice. Inevitably, sooner or later, they will ask *why*. When they do, the moment will have come for evangelism.

I hesitate to use that word because, in the university community, it has unfortunate connotations. I do not mean by it that we should adopt anything like the Brother-are-you-saved technique. If the brother in question gives you the right verbal answer, how do you know what he means by it? And if he gives the wrong verbal answer, how can you be sure the experience behind it is not valid in substance? It is not for us to judge. It is God who condemns and God who justifies.

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It would, however, be a very poor Christian who was unwilling to confess his Lord before men when the opportunity presents itself. Actions do not always speak louder than words, and they often require explanation. It is at once the desire and the duty of the Christian to acknowledge the source of his strength and to make that source available to those who do not possess it. Christian professors must learn to be articulate about their faith and get over that shyness about religious matters which comes from excessive individualism. Here again the faculty Christian fellowship can perform a unique service.

The faculty Christian fellowship is called to be a body of Christian professors who witness to the power, the truth, the beauty, and the glory of their Lord by their deeds and, because of their deeds, by their words. It is the mission of Christian professors to transform what they cannot reform, to become together the nuclei of a new academic society, a society within a society that will grow in response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. They can become the university branch of the Kingdom of God on earth, a true university church in the New Testament sense of the word church. We Christian professors, individually *and collectively* have no greater responsibility to our colleagues than that one.

### Hexameters, Pentameters

PETER VIERECK

1.

Too tuned to your personal rhythm on stairways, I lose for your sake  
Everything else in the world into overtones, all out of reach.  
Because, when tired, your forehead is earnest as children at play  
Many a garden ago, your shoulders many shrugs older,  
Therefore, I memorize wildly the face I see, outside and in,  
Each ray-like eyelash skirting some afterglow long out of reach.  
So does sky's afterglow drag out of reach on hilltops  
Frayed rays of party-skirts, girl's flounce of purple. No,  
Already gray.

2.

Shadow of cheekbones, clouded slant of cheeks  
I see but not the skeleton beneath  
That lovers hymn in banal bitterness.  
If I unveil that face-veiled future also,  
Then what I see is this: not skull but urn.  
A quick light flounce of ashes out of reach,  
Is this the dusty hem of the last trailing  
Of party-skirts, a moment's purple? No,  
Already gray.

## Religion and Values in Sociological Theory

WILLIAM L. KOLB



**S**OIOLOGY TODAY is a secular and secularized discipline. As a professional man, the sociologist is bound by the moral rules of the profession, but he generally can offer no ground for the existence of these rules which will render them binding. If pressed he may fall back upon a form of instrumentalism and argue that if one wants to be able to predict human action, certain rules of objective procedure and analysis must be adhered to. Or he may simply respond that the values obligatory upon science are, like other values, matters of deep personal preference and allegiance. In any event he will not argue that these moral norms, or any others, can be validated scientifically, nor will he attempt to find some non-empirical base on which they may be grounded.

The tensions generated by being a committed Christian as well as a sociologist are not, however, primarily created by the refusal of the profession to be concerned about the bases of its ethic of science. The Christian can without difficulty accept the separation of the empirical sciences from other disciplines so long as no claim is made that such sciences are the sole mode of cognition available to man. So long as the sociologist who is a Christian follows the norms of the discipline, the profession does not object to his being a Christian, although many individual members of the profession may regard him as eccentric or as one whose biases must be carefully watched.

Tensions do arise, however, from three other sources. First, many sociologists have an implicit metaphysic, either positivistic or naturalistic, which results in the taking of certain attitudes toward empirical and non-empirical phenomena which the Christian cannot share. While these attitudes are no more empirical or scientific than the metaphysical attitudes of the Christian, they are frequently interwoven among empirical generalizations in such a manner as to create considerable confusion and tension among those who do not share the attitudes. Second, the fundamental theoretical conceptualizations of the discipline, even though empirical in their reference, are likely to be limited by these metaphysical presuppositions, and hence to be incompatible with similar theoretical conceptualizations of empirical reference derived from a Christian orientation. Finally, the actual empirical knowledge of the discipline, partly limited by its theoretical conceptualizations and partly by the fact that systematic empirical investigation is still in its earliest stages, while not incompatible with the empirical insights of the Judaic-Christian tradition, cannot yet be used to validate such insights in their entirety. The nature of these tensions can be shown by giving a brief description of the Christian view of man, morals, and religion and then relating that description to the sociological treatment of the same phenomena.

The Christian believes by faith and from the insights gained by faith that the moral code of every human society is relative to the time and circumstance of that

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society. But he also believes that the end term of every system of morality is the absolute norm of love; that this norm is not simply realizable in the affairs of men so that while it informs a system of norms it also stands in judgment on the system; that this norm is anchored in a God of creation, love, judgment, and redemption; and that there is in human nature a need for faith, hope, and love resting in such a God, while at the same time that same human nature inevitably turns away from and becomes estranged from God and other men. Further he sees man standing in such a relation to God that to some extent he stands outside society although always within it also. In such a context social systems of moral norms have their origin in the moral insights of men turning toward God. Once developed they are transmitted culturally and hence become a social phenomenon. But always there is the possibility that such culturally shared values may become irrelevant to the situation, may lose their state of intimate yet tense connection with the norm of love, or may prove themselves to have been derived from allegiance to a false god. In all these circumstances the individual and the believing community, if there is one, must stand against the society and its system of shared values. Finally, the Christian believes that at a particular point in history God revealed himself in Christ, and that in the light of that revelation man knows that if he repents his failure to love he will be forgiven, that he is loved, and that he is taken as righteous while still in his violation of the supreme norm. This is the special revelation that clarifies the universal revelation in which man at the outermost reaches of his experience recognizes that he has been created, that he is judged, and that he needs to be redeemed.

This Christian belief is a synthesis of elements that transcend empirical knowledge and of others that are at least theoretically susceptible to empirical test. The empirical elements might be formulated somewhat as follows: Man as a self who can be an object to himself is aware of his own finiteness and of the contingency of his existence. The anxiety created by this awareness can be permanently allayed only by man's relating himself in his definition of the situation to a non-empirical god of creativity and love and to the empirical world of his fellow-men. Only in this manner can the individual and human society exist in a fully integrated state. Thus the system of norms of a fully integrated society expresses the norm of love in relation to the exigencies of the historical moment of the society. But man universally fails to make this response in its completeness; hence even where a god of this sort is believed in and oriented to he must include the additional qualities of being judge and redeemer, and the moral code of the society although anchored in this conception must exist in a state of tension with the norm of love. Otherwise the integration of the society must ultimately break down. The momentary allaying of anxiety and integration of society can be achieved by an orientation to gods with other attributes, and even by making certain empirical objects conceived in a non-empirical fashion such as the nation or man himself god, and by rendering ultimate allegiance to values other than love. But ultimately men and society cannot endure under such circumstances. Finally, the fullest possibility of creating this relationship to the conceived

God and of creating human community is presented by conceiving in faith the historical Jesus as the Son of God manifesting God's redeeming love and forgiveness.

In this account nothing is said about the truth of the actors' conceptions and experiences of God, Christ, or the absolute norm of love. What is said is that actors can and do have such conceptions and beliefs and that they need them. Thus the statements about the functional needs of men, the integrative needs of society, and the relation of religious experience to them are empirical statements and at least potentially susceptible to scientific verification.

The sociologist as sociologist, however, is certainly not ready to accept such statements as being empirically true at present, and as a matter of fact would be highly dubious if he were to be confronted with them. Even the sociologist who is a Christian cannot claim these statements as part of the body of tested propositions of sociology, nor can he contend that they have received serious consideration as a source for the formulation of testable hypotheses. Hence to the extent that as a Christian he accepts them as empirical truths, tension exists in his own mind between these truths and the truths of his discipline, and perhaps between him and his fellow sociologists.

The nature of these tensions is not simple, however, for sociology no longer tends to take the older rationalistic view of religion and moral values, in which all religion is a form of cognitive error, useful at one time in supporting values arrived at through a process of trial and error but no longer useful as scientific means are found for determining the validity of values. Today many sociologists are likely to believe that both individual men and societies are integrated through a system of shared ultimate values and that the validity of these values in the eyes of men can only be established by attitudes of faith and hope taken toward some non-empirical entity. They are also likely to recognize that individual man does have existential anxieties, and that these can be allayed only by a similar orientation toward a non-empirical world.

The first form of tension that is likely to arise between the Christian and the non-Christian sociologist arises only if the latter is a positivist and argues that though values and religion are necessary for man in some form, all forms are illusory because their truth cannot be demonstrated scientifically and science is the only mode of cognition. This is not a tension rooted in the nature of sociology, but in the metaphysics of the sociologist. It does not exist between the Christian sociologist and the sociologist who recognizes the limits of science and at least the possibility of other modes of cognition. Where it does exist it cannot be resolved, but it need not exist in the discipline as such.

The second mode of tension arises in that the basic theoretical ideas which developed in sociology on a naturalistic or positivistic basis result in the conceptualization of functional needs, personality, society, and social integration in a different manner than is present in the Christian formulation. Although there is a recognition

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of certain universal functional prerequisites for the integration of personality and society, apart from those needs which are biological and from those of a limited psychological nature, such as the need to be loved by some particular human beings, the remainder tend to be formally defined. Thus society and personality are conceived as having need of *some* system of ultimate values and of *some* orientation to a non-empirical world which validates those values and allays existential anxiety; but so long as the values and the gods permit the satisfaction of biological needs, the limited universal psychological needs, and the functional demands of the particular historical situation, their content does not matter. The Christian God is one among many who can meet these demands; and even the conception of a creating, loving, judging, and redeeming God who is not explicitly Christian may not be required. Nor is the norm of universal love functionally necessary, for in the struggle of the society to maintain itself as a going concern a wide range of ultimate values may actually serve the integrative function.

The minimal universal content attributed to the nature of individual man and the stress upon society in its struggle to survive in the competition with other societies tend to make both religion and personality essentially social phenomena. Personality apart from its biological qualities and its limited psychic needs is considered to be a social product; and the orientation of the person to the non-empirical is regarded as overwhelmingly a matter of the learning of culture. Hence the person is left no ground on which to stand in opposition to the society and to the religion of the society. Religion itself has had the problem of its origin neglected. Somehow, somehow religion has arisen out of the formal needs for social and personal integration. Little attention is paid to the fact that new forms of social organization and life have arisen as a consequence of religious orientations. With little notice thus taken of the creative acts and thoughts of selves and of the birth of new religious ideals and beliefs in periods of collective ferment in which such creativity reaches a peak, it is little wonder that the tendency is to regard religion and personality as social phenomena rather than to regard society as at least in part a religious phenomenon created and sustained by the creative acts of personalities.

The tension created by the confrontation of such theoretical orientations with the empirical theory derivable from a Christian view of man is essentially healthy. While the Christian sociologist as a Christian places credence in the empirical as well as the non-empirical aspects of the Christian view of man, he knows that this view has been built by reflections on the meaning of revelation considered in relation to the facts of human history and that it cannot be regarded as final and absolute in its formulation. He further knows that the empirical aspects of the Christian view of man have not been tested by the methods of modern social science. While he doubts that some of the methods are applicable to such a testing of the Christian view of man, he holds the view with humility and with a willingness to submit it to test with the methods that are relevant. As a sociologist true to the ethic of his profession he must also be willing to enter the Christian view into the competition of ideas and

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research, so long as others are willing to recognize it as an empirically relevant alternative to other theoretical points of view.

The third source of tension is also healthy when viewed within the perspective of the second. Since specific hypotheses derived from the empirical social theory of the Christian faith have never been formulated they also have never been tested. Hence we do not know, sociologically, whether they are true or not. No sociologist has ever formulated a hypothesis derived from the premise that man has a need to worship a creating loving, forgiving God, and that substitute gods will leave him unsatisfied. Until such a hypothesis is formulated and tested, skepticism, not rejection, is the only genuinely scientific attitude. Until sociologists find some way of formulating and testing a hypothesis that social integration built on the norm of love meets more needs and is more enduring than integration on the basis of other norms, all that they can say they know is that *some* ultimate value is necessary to integrate society.

Tremendous difficulties stand in the way of the formulation and testing of such hypotheses. First, the theoretical point of view from which they are to be derived must be taken seriously as an empirical theory of man. Second, there must be prolonged analysis of the similarities and differences of this theory and other theories; and efforts made to see whether this theory can account for some phenomena already observed that cannot be accounted for by the others. Third, concepts such as "integration" and "need" must be refined, so that possible differences in the quality and duration of various modes of integration can be investigated. But these are difficulties, not insurmountable obstacles. Already the merits of other theoretical systems in leading to new empirical discoveries are revealing defects in that some of these discoveries cannot be subsumed under the systems. There is a growing suspicion, for example, that universal human nature is more complex than systems of contemporary thought have imagined. Hence some sociologists are coming to the point where they are ready to consider at least certain aspects of the Christian view of man. There is recognition of the need for conceptual refinement of such concepts as integration, function, and need. There is increasing recognition that the range of integrative ultimate values is limited, although the limits still possess considerable width.

Thus there is ferment in sociological thought. In this ferment the Christian sociologist sees the possibility of the emergence of a sociology which in cooperation with the other empirical sciences will utilize and test the empirical insights of the Christian faith. If these insights test out as he believes they will, the ultimate truth of the faith will not thereby be established, but the correctness of its empirical image of man will and so will its meaningfulness in meeting human needs. At the empirical level nothing more can be asked. That he will receive what he does ask at the empirical level is his wager as a Christian sociologist. For the rest, the non-empirical aspects of the faith, he expects to know God as other Christians do, through revelation apprehended through the faith of the historical community of believers.

## The Tensions in Which the Academic Man Lives

HARRY SMITH



LAST APRIL, *Time* quoted from a Russell Sage Foundation study that today's minister is "somewhat bewildered to find that his traditional function as preacher is being superceded by the functions of pastor, administrator, counselor, organizer, educator, and promoter." The campus religious worker has been similarly "bewildered" for some years—for not only in his traditional function changing but his status and roles in the academic community are becoming increasingly ambiguous. It is appropriate, therefore, that the *Scholar's* scrutiny of the tensions within the academic community include some discussion of the campus religious worker.

*Neither fish nor fowl . . .*

An amorphous creature whose primary channel to the minds of students is tutorial, the campus pastor can scarcely be considered a professor or instructor in the academic sense. Though licensed and ordained to "preach the Word", in few cases does he have a regular preaching relationship to his parish—and any prophetic word he once had has long since been replaced by the public relations and promotion spiel which such occasion as "Christian Higher Education Sunday" demand. Though trained with a seminary course in group work and constantly involved in committees and study groups, he flinches at the implication that he is a "group worker" and quickly explains an indebtedness to but reservations about "Group Dynamics." Though serving quite regularly as a confessor, absolver, and channel of God's grace, his role cannot be accurately described as "priestly." While the books on his shelves on the relations of psychiatry to religion indicate his concern for counseling, he readily recognizes his limitations, even in this area. And though he may keep a finger in the academic coursework of the university, in most instances he is quick to correct the hard of hearing, "No, no, I'm *not* a student, but a minister *to* students." Neither professor nor preacher, neither group worker nor priest, neither psychiatric counselor nor student—but involved in all these roles;—what *can* we call the campus religious worker?

*What's in a name?*

This ambiguity in roles is reflected in the variety of titles under which campus religious workers operate. For years, "YMCA secretary" or "Director of the Christian Association" was title enough. But when the denominations made their entree into campus religious life, the confusion began. "Student worker" was, and still is, the generic label for these staff persons, though many have pointed out its implications, that this man is still a student, or that he is a professional who "works" the students. So the Baptists speak of "BSU Directors", the Methodists of their "Wesley Foundation Directors", while the Episcopal staff person is the

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"Episcopal Chaplain to Students" or the "Priest to the Episcopal Student Congregation." The Presbyterian Church, USA, has tended to use the title "University Pastor" while the Presbyterian Church, US, speaks of its "Ministers to Students" or "Campus Christian Life Workers."

Yet none of these titles adequately communicates the scope of the ministry as now conceived. The title "minister to students" gives no indication of the concern for faculty work and certainly does not justify membership in the local Faculty Club. At the same time, "university pastor" is confusing in situations where there are pastors of the surrounding "university" churches. And to tie in the name of a Foundation or denominational program simply perpetuates the stereotype of the minister as the "genial host over at the Student Center" or one who is interested only in his own brand of Christians.<sup>1</sup>

*Great and mixed expectations . . .*

Follow a campus pastor (the term we will use, though not happily) through an average day and he moves from the role of *pastor* preparing a Sunday sermon; to *counselor* with a distraught student; to *chaplain* in a staff meeting on campus mental health problems; to *colleague* at the Faculty Club luncheon; to *student* in an afternoon philosophy seminar; to *employee* in an evening meeting of his Board, composed largely of faculty members to *resource person* in a late study group in his home. These, in addition to his role as *teacher* in Bible Class on Sunday, *discussion leader* at a staff study on Wednesday, and *advisor* to the Council on Thursday evening, and the roles he plays as husband, citizen, member of Presbytery, etc.

The constant tension in this ministry is the struggle to hold these roles in some ordered pattern. Too easily, the counseling role becomes the most time consuming, for whereas the professor-as-counselor or the psychiatrist-as-therapist can limit interviews and avert imposition, the campus pastor is constantly on call; availability is of necessity his middle name. Or he is so cast in the "specialist in religion" role that he is unable to function as a member of a discussion or study group.

In a paper prepared for one of the World Council of Churches study commissions the writers indicate that a contributing factor in the churches' disunity is the prevailing misunderstanding of the role of the minister in contemporary culture. They conclude that he is "too much a *promoter*, and not enough a *pastor*; too much a *personality*, and not enough *priest*; too much *chaplain*, and not enough a *prophet*."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>We are discussing here primarily denominationally employed campus religious workers, rather than the officially designated "College Chaplains" or YMCA-YWCA secretaries employed by a college administration. Yet many of the problems are similar. Seymour Smith's recent study on the college chaplaincy describes the special status of this relatively new phenomenon on the American college scene.

<sup>2</sup>Carl DeVane and Gaylord Noyce, "The Functioning of the American Protestant Minister as a Factor in Church Caste and Class Stratification," unpublished paper prepared for Raleigh-Durham Study Commission of the World Council of Churches on "The Nature of the Unity We Seek."

## THE TENSIONS IN WHICH THE ACADEMIC MAN LIVES

If this is a valid description of the minister at large, it is even more true for the campus pastor. For lacking a clearly defined status either in relation to his own denomination or the university, he must rely heavily upon his personality and connections to gain status on the campus. In this quest for status, he is constantly torn between the urge to identify with students, to become "one of the boys", and his desire to fulfill a priestly function. He stands within an ecclesiastical structure and is a spokesman for the Church, yet he desires identification with the university community as a colleague and intellectual. To suggest a single role into which the campus pastor finally settles would be too neat to be accurate, and would minimize the ambiguity which is his in a pattern of constantly changing roles. Yet it will sharpen the problem to examine his relationship to faculty.

### *Colleague or errand boy?*

A paper presented at the Presbyterian US staff conference this past summer<sup>3</sup> suggested three aspects of the pastor-faculty relationship which are normative if not accurately descriptive. The campus pastor is, first of all, a *friend* who is genuinely interested in the personal problems and needs of his faculty friends. So he plays handball and attends concerts with faculty members and shares in their extra-curricular fellowship. He is secondly, a *colleague*, one who believes in and is dedicated to the cause of higher education. His special concern for the students' spiritual development is but one phase of the total process of maturation during college years, and as a colleague he works hand in hand with faculty and administration. The third relation is that of an *expert* who has special aptitude in religion because of his special training. In this relation he may be consulted concerning Biblical or theological references, asked to lecture on a particular period or subject.

Often, however, these relationships have broken down, or, more accurately, have never developed. Sometimes, because of the inability of the campus pastor to cultivate genuine friendships and his tendency to misuse and manipulate faculty members. Again, the colleague relationship has never materialized because of the tendency of faculty and administration to consider the religious worker as the director of an extra-curricular and somewhat extraneous off-campus religious program. Too often, they complain, the campus religious groups have pulled students away from their books and put them to running mimeograph machines, planning parties, or taken students out of classes for week-end retreats and conferences. And there is enough truth in the charge to justify their reluctance to view the college pastor as their colleague in the academic endeavor. Or the intellectual incompetency of the campus pastor has destroyed any hope that he will be considered a resource person or expert by faculty members. "He must win his way by demonstrating his competence," John Dixon wrote in the February FCF Bulletin, "whereas a professor might have his competence assured until he demonstrates its lack."

<sup>3</sup>Yandell Page, "The Role of the University Pastor", unpublished paper prepared for Campus Christian Life Section of Presbyterian Educational Association of the South, Montreat, June, 1956.

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To break the stereotype of the campus pastor as mere "coffee and doughnut provider", and to prepare men more adequately for their ministry, the denominations are putting increasing emphasis upon the academic preparation and pastoral experience of the men they send to the campus. Writes Harold Viehman of the Presbyterian Church, USA, "Many of the men we are now placing have brought the additional advantages of master's and doctoral studies. Such graduate studies, in addition to providing the benefits of knowledge in a particular field which may open the university at several concrete points, give a general confidence for moving about in the university world."<sup>4</sup> Summer sessions in seminaries and graduate schools are being used by many campus pastors to continue their post-BD studies. Staff conferences and seminars are digging into the "University Question" and related problems at an ever deeper level. And, in spite of objections from some faculty to having too many professional religionists or clerics about, campus pastors are actively participating in the scattered Faculty Christian Fellowship discussions and conferences.

Our role, however, in relation to the Faculty Christian Fellowship remains ambiguous. On some campuses the pastor has served as convenor for the initial meetings of the local group, continuing as secretary or functionary. Elsewhere, he participates with full equality, chairing the group or serving as "program co-chairman" with a faculty member. In yet other situations he has remained on the sidelines, an interested bystander who dares not intrude. The tenure, personality, and intellectual training and competence of the campus pastor are the determining factors here, of course. But too often the role of "colleague" or "co-worker" in the academic community has slipped to office or errand boy in view of the understandable zeal to keep the Faculty Christian Fellowship "of, for and by the faculty."

### *Continuing problems . . .*

In addition to this undefined relation of campus pastors to the Faculty Christian Fellowship, other problem areas might be noted in closing, areas which perpetuate uncertainty and ambiguity in the relationship between campus pastors and faculty.

(a) The same brokenness and fragmentation which has rent asunder any wholeness in the academic community, that has increasingly divided student from faculty, and department from department, has tended to fracture any meaningful pastor-faculty relationship within the university. We are "pros" at theology; you are "laymen". We are ministers while you are educators. We are "staff", whereas you are faculty. Somehow, the common longing for wholeness and meaning that the university pastor shares with the Christian professor must be utilized as the basis for a new relationship as colleagues. A Monday night study group on

<sup>4</sup>Harold Viehman, "Claiming our Campuses for Christ," an address delivered at the 41st Annual session PEAS, Montreat, June, 1955.

## THE TENSIONS IN WHICH THE ACADEMIC MAN LIVES

contemporary novels and plays at the campus pastor's home can be not only an occasion to pull in faculty as "resource persons" or experts, but a chance to cut across faculty-student and staff-faculty lines in discovering together the relationship between Christian theology and contemporary literature. For we are co-workers in this quest for a recovery of wholeness and meaning on the campus.

(b) Language continues to be a problem dividing the university, as each discipline boasts its own categories and terms, its own unique dialect. So the campus pastor feels uneasy and incompetent to discuss the conflict between Jung and Freud, or the shades of difference among logical positivists or the operating postulates of the bio-chemists—because he does not know the right terms and does not wish to appear stupid. At the same time, his faculty friends are not likely to be conversant about Bultmann's "demythologizing" or the problem of hermeneutics or Tillich's ontological approach to justice. As a consequence, the discussion over coffee is banal, about baseball standings or the weather. Deep communication about ultimate questions is circumvented and avoided because we speak in different tongues.

Any hope for meaningful communication in our academic Towers of Babel rests in an effort by both faculty and pastors to struggle together for terms which can be understood. In some cases, this will be Biblical categories; in others, the terms of the professor's own discipline.

(c) The campus pastors' ambiguous status can be blamed on his own denomination, as much as on his standing within the university. As long as parents see his job as "college guardian," an extension of parental care; as long as home pastors look upon him as a missionary camped beside a pagan academic jungle; as long as his local board expects him to be an errand boy for the local minister; as long as his denominational superiors measure his "success" in terms of men recruited for the ministry or transferred to church colleges—his work will be complicated by conflicting expectations.

Few denominations have recognized this as a valid ministry, comparable to missionary or teaching or pastoral positions. With few exceptions, denominational seminaries continue to prepare for the parish ministry, providing little or no specialized training to equip men for a ministry in the university. A campus post is considered a stepping-stone to a *real* parish and few college pastors have not been asked at some time—alas, often by faculty colleagues—when they plan to return to the "active ministry." Somehow the churches must take the campus ministry with new seriousness and must provide the specialized training which is essential for it.

(d) As the student Christian movements have talked in recent years of "the evangelization of the University" as their *raison d'être*, they have been forced to take with new seriousness the nature of the university. For as Dr. A. T. Mol-

legen once pointed out, "We have been saving students for the Church by saving them from an education." Abroad now is the recognition that the evangelization of the University is not something the Church does *at* or *to* the campus, but something that happens *through* the life of the Christian community there, a community composed of faculty and administration as well as students. This requires that faculty members see beyond the stereotype of "student work" to the totality of the campus ministry, a work involving faculty, administration and students. At the same time, it requires, as one campus pastor put it, "a genuine conviction on the part of the pastor that God may well say much more to him through the academic person than He does to the student or faculty member through the pastor."<sup>5</sup>

Any meaningful answer to the so-called "University Question," and the conglomeration of problems arising out of the fragmentation and brokenness and search for purpose in university life today, will be found not by a USCC Study Commission composed solely of students, or a "Week of Work" composed solely of faculty, or a staff seminar on the philosophy of higher education. Any recovery of wholeness in the Christian sense will come only as faculty, students, administration, and religious staff come together as concerned persons willing to deal with one another *as persons*, as full participants in the academic community, who by the grace of God desire to find the Christian basis for their life and unity there.

<sup>5</sup>E. V. Stein, in a letter to the Faculty Christian Fellowship *Bulletin*, February, 1956.

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## Christian Scandal at the Academic Meeting

WERNER A. BOHNSTEDT

*Note: Time is relative. The reader should therefore not be surprised to learn that I found the following letters sometime in the future, while rummaging through the shelves of a friend's summer cottage in the woods of the Georgian Bay region of Ontario. The writer was apparently an average college professor with that particular mixture of intelligence and naiveté that is so typical of the profession. If I deem them worthy of publication it is because they are representative of a very widespread attitude towards reality, especially among the younger set. They reflect the supreme self-confidence of that large group that swears by the scientific method, a confidence so infectious that we can almost speak of a Totalitarianism of Science in the life of the nation. This totalitarianism is spreading into all branches of life, even into the churches. Under the double impact of a defense of the Free World against totalitarianism that developed in Europe and Asia in the first part of the century, and the spread of scientism as a cure-all, the traditional groupings of society are dissolving. Of this development the letters give a certain impression. I have done little editing, so as not to destroy the spontaneous character of the reports. The letters were addressed to Dr. Harmon E. Wewont, General Laboratories, Highflight, Canada. Their author is, or rather was, Dr. A. Tom Newager, professor of social science at Cartesius University, Wisconsin, USA, before the administrative Leviathan swallowed him and he became assistant to the president for research. Wewont and Newager are (or will be) no longer with us. While Tom was on a visit at General Laboratories, someone threw the wrong switch, and the whole place went up in vapor. Should you fly across the Laurentians in the future you might happen to see the bare spot where General Laboratories once stood in splendid seclusion.*

W.A.B.

The Hiltostat Hotel  
Convention City  
Fall Meeting Time, 19..

Dear Harmon,

Here I am at last, installed in my streamlined, air-conditioned room in this newest miracle of applied science in Convention City. To my knowledge this is the first time in its short history that this splendid establishment is graced by an academic convention. And what a convention it will be: the first meeting of the Amalgamated Learned Societies of America (ALSA). A daring undertaking in this time of specialization, but one that certainly shows that there is still vision on our campuses and research centers, and even in the executive councils of our academic societies. All kinds of guests are expected to attend, among those some of the more famous retired young generals who have now become stars on the executive heavens of industry. Their presence at the meeting is indeed an encouraging

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Dr. Bohnstedt is Professor of History at Michigan State College, East Lansing.

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sign of the new harmony between learning and business. It is true that in some other countries even now people look with suspicion upon the influence that business is wielding in research, perhaps even in academic teaching, in the mass communication media, government, and even the armed forces. But fortunately that is no problem with us. Under the pressure of the exigencies of protecting our Way of Life against infiltration by The Enemy, the traditional structure of the body politic has gradually disappeared. This might have been catastrophical had not the scientific development in practically all fields of learning furnished the methods and instruments by which to cope with the situation. Partisan politics, ideological emotionalism and the play of pressure groups have given way to scientifically geared rationality, and under the intelligent operation of the CSCNF (Council of Scientific Coordination of National Freedom) the life of the nation is being increasingly harmonized. Unencumbered by so-called traditions and other remnants of the past, we shall be able to build the New Society and make this world of ours into a really New Star. I am sure that our convention will not just show what has been accomplished so far, but also point towards the future. After all, we have amalgamated all learned societies not for the fun of it, but to make the arsenal of learning available for a co-ordinated and even integrated attempt to achieve the re-formation of nature and society.

I am afraid I must close now. I've just played around a little with the tele-selector which is installed in each room. Marvelous thing with its multiscreen. You can see simultaneous meetings going on. In some ingenious way of acoustic engineering the voices of the different speakers do not mingle even if you have all screens alive. You can leisurely select the meeting that seems to be the most interesting. I shall presently go to the "Fundamental Philosophy of Life and Society in the New World Society" meeting. More tomorrow.

Tom

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Morning of the Second Day

Dear Harmon:

The first day of the meeting went very well indeed. Professor Conehead's talk on "Common Sense and Non Sense in the New Society" drew together in most admirable form what we have achieved in thought, word and deed in the period between Newton and Einstein. He showed very cogently the basic soundness of humanist rationalism as both an attitude and a method by which we can see, analyze, and finally manipulate, reality "as it really is, that is completely objectively." The old argument, that at least wherever man enters into the picture, he can not completely detach himself in the double relationship of subject-object, Conehead declared, has been taken care of. In a rare combination of symbolic logic and psycho-statistical research results, it has been possible to develop formulas with the help of which we can extrapolate the EP (emotion and/or prejudice) factor, and

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thus objectivate human research of humans as completely as that of any other subject matter. In his witty way the speaker made good fun of the fact that Newton spent considerable time and effort during his adult life on the study and refinement of astrology (hard to believe but true), that the great men of the enlightenment and even a Darwin still felt obliged to justify their views in the light of traditional religion, and that still in our century such outstanding men as Whitehead, Einstein, Schroedinger and others bring in the extraneous figure of the deity. He expressed his confidence that with the help of ever-refined statistical methods in the social sciences and further development of analytic philosophy by people like Russell, Carnap, Wittgenstein and others, we are well on our road to clear away the rubbish of all that is called metaphysical. When that is achieved, man will finally be revealed as reason incarnate and as that being which is able and willing to conquer nature, and re-shape it according to the laws of reason and the needs of man. It goes without saying that this process of re-formation includes man and his society.

It is strange to contemplate, dear Harmon, that now, after a perilous voyage of three centuries, we seem to have arrived finally at the threshold of that Age of Reason of which Newton and his successors were dreaming. All this was beautifully summed up by a fellow in the discussion, whose name I did not catch. This was his remark: "In the pure abstractions of mathematics, not in metaphysical images and religious mirages, lies the true reality, unveiled and unspoiled. With mathematics as basis and main instrument and compass, we shall be able to re-construct the world of matter and mind, and to bring out the translucent crystallinity which expresses its true nature. Rational man alone can and will accomplish this." You see there can be poetry in scientific language, and you can imagine the applause which the speaker got. I soon will learn his name, because I am certain that he will be considered a "natural" for the presidency of the ALSA for the first period of its existence.

The meeting of this section was so exhilarating for the mind and at the same time so strenuous, that I decided to rest in my room for a while. I "looked in" at some other meetings over the telescreen. It was most reassuring to listen to snatches of the discussion in the social sciences and the psychology meetings. Apparently the dynamics-statisticoanalysts rule the roost completely. It was touching to observe the polite tolerance with which a very much bored audience listened to an elderly gentleman with a thick German accent, who declared that sociology without a philosophical basis would soon degenerate into pointless sociography and become a mere tool in the hands of sociopoliticians. Though it was indeed boring to listen to him, even over the screen, it does no harm to see some of the old die-hards perform who still cling to sentimental and unscientific ideas about the nature of the social sciences. They actually claim that sociology and psychology are part of the humanities, and not of the natural sciences. I can not understand it, because, after all, what is man but a very intelligent animal? But being the scholarly type myself, I am willing to take the advice of the Englishman C. S. Lewis who back

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in 1954 declared in his inaugural address at Cambridge University that what he called "Old Western" man, that is the type of man molded by classical tradition of culture was becoming extinct very fast to join the dinosaur. "Speaking not only for myself" he said "but for all other Old Western men whom you meet, I would say use your specimens while you can. There are not going to be many more dinosaurs." So with the old scholar on the meeting-screen. He is a good example of the bungling that went on in the learned world in the past, and I am willing to look at him as one does at a rare specimen. But how I wish that he and the other Old Western men would join their dinosaur brothers somewhat more quickly!

Tom

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Morning of the Third Day

Dear Harmon:

Yesterday I had a really busy time. In my capacity as the chairman of the All University Research Committee at Cartesius University, I felt it was my duty to attend as great a variety of sectional meetings as possible. At the same time this would serve the purpose of becoming a little better known to other people in connection with my plan to get on the Executive Committee of the Northwestern Regional Intellectual Coordination Council, an organization with a great future, I believe. So, instead of staying in my room and participating in meetings as a televisionary, as one of our group quipped last night at the Bar, I went from room to room. Actually the "electioneering" is not really necessary. I shudder when I think of what the politicking and bickering and dickering must have been like in academic elections of the past. Fortunately that now belongs to history. Nominations from the floor are practically out in our days of the "do it scientifically" method. The nominating committee does a clean and effective job with the so-called "Speedway 78" method, which eliminates delay and intrigue alike. The method is really quite good. You combine the results of the psycho-socio-efficiency tests with the rating of the ASOP (Administrative Scientific Opinion Poll), and of the FSORI (Free Society Objective Reasoning Index), make sure that the candidate is a "Sasci" (Sound and safe citizen) according to the files of the APSIS (The Apsis which stands for American Public Safety Information Service seems to be a successor to the FBI. the editor), and you get an objective over-all rating which is free of fancy and prejudice. I am confident I shall make the grade and that my rating will be high enough to get me elected. As one might expect most votes are cast for the candidates with the highest rating number (these are printed behind each name on the ballot). That is what I call social engineering at its best, and am looking towards the elections with quiet confidence.

But back to the meeting. Reviewing what I heard yesterday in the different meetings I was struck by the fact that apparently all speakers and discussants agreed on two basic issues, one related to the other. The first is that man is an

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animal different from others by his predominantly reasonable nature, and that nature in toto is something that in a reasonable and predictable way operates by a continuous evolutionary process which allows us to draw valid conclusions concerning the future on the basis of the earlier stages of operation and development. There are no breaks, and there is no outside interference of any kind. The other agreement concerns the scientific method based on and operating with the principle of rationality within the framework of continuous and predictable operation of man and nature alike. In consequence it is certain that the scientific method in one form or other (quite some adaptability there, after all) offers itself as a satisfactory instrument of both analysis of and solution for any worthwhile problem in nature, society or individual (human or other animal). Pure and applied research are like brother and sister, or better yet, like identical twins.

I was interested in the remarks made by one speaker that if the people on the side of The Enemy could rid themselves of the extraneous overlay of Marxian metaphysics (which he called an illegitimate child of Hegelian absolutism, whatever that may mean), there would be no barriers to keep us from complete co-operation in practically all fields of learning and engineering (including social engineering). Indeed, he said, except for this political overlay, there was already scarcely any difference in approach and method. Maybe the recent rapprochement between the Free and the Curtained World will bring about enough lowering of the curtain for us to step over it.

But I must close. Today is the day of the Great Debate, where resumées of the sectional meetings will be presented and an attempt be made to arrive at an integrated statement of what we consider the common basis for our work in all fields, and an outline for co-ordinated work in the future.

Tom

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Evening of the Third Day

Dear Harmon,

What a day this has turned out to be. I better report to you now, before I go to dinner with some friends. I'm not sure I'll be able to eat at all. Were I to give this day a name, I would call it the day of the Christian Scandal. But I am running ahead of myself. When I entered the Auditorium where the general assembly was to be held, I found an atmosphere of cheer and confidence. Deweyson's keynote address "The Dynamics of Science and the Future" was scholarly and lucid, and his great father would have been proud of the son's achievement. The resumées were as expected: informative and dull. Too bad that General Baldur Jetthrust with his very interesting talk on "Crossfertilization of Science and Industry" was scheduled after the resumées and just before lunch. Somehow what he had to say did not go over with the audience.



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After lunch came the great debate. As was to be expected, there were some dissonant voices. One of our European friends, who is now teaching here, warned us that we should not be too certain of our premises. He is of the opinion that our image of the world and of reality altogether might be in for a revolutionary change as a result of the destruction of many of our basic concepts by theoretical physics. He mentioned the concepts of continuity, causality among others. Somehow what he says makes me feel pretty uneasy, but I can not yet put my finger on what I think is wrong with his view. A wholesale attack on our idea that this earth and the planetary system have developed slowly and more or less peacefully over millions of years was made by a man from the Near East. He claims that recent developments in astrophysics, and field evidence in geological and archeological research are forcing us to revise our picture considerably, admitting catastrophe as a catalyst of new developments in short periods. This would also mean that we would have to abandon the current theories of evolution. I know that we must have an open mind, and that without dissention there is no scientific progress, but I consider these two attacks as a questionable deviation from the road of Right Reasoning. But all this was chickenfeed compared with what happened next. Of all people it was my old friend Chris Bellringer who practically broke up the meeting. Chris and I have been good friends ever since we roomed together in college days, and I always thought that Chris was a reasonable fellow. But is he really? After his performance in the meeting I'm not so sure any more. Rather he seems to be a star specimen of Old Western Man, a dinosaur, and one of the specially unreasonable variety *Homo Christianus*. I have a number of friends and colleagues who are Christians and go to Church more or less regularly. Some even wear a little cross in their lapel or on the watch chain where it keeps uneasy company with a Phi Beta Kappa key. But there is nothing unusual in their behavior. Nor in their way of thinking. They have fun with us, they play bridge or even poker like the rest of us. They like to drink, especially when away from campus and community (as a matter of fact those who are sons of the stricter protestant ministers seem to enjoy a drink more than many an atheist). I find that my Christian friends are just as active in campus politics and intrigue, and fight just as hard for status and reward as everybody else. Fortunately, they are also just as good as we as scholars and teachers. They use the same kind of logic, the same presuppositions in their professional theories, have the same prejudices both as men and scholars, and altogether I would be at a loss were I to explain in how far their religion makes a difference in their life. Even the number of children is about the same in the families of my friends, whether Christian, humanist, atheist or indifferent. Is there no difference, or are they either too cautious to let on, or wolves in sheep's clothing? I still don't know. But on to Chris' speech. It is almost unbelievable that he had the nerve to get up in such a meeting and to start by quoting from the Old Testament. "In the Beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth"; "God created man in His own image; in His own image created He him" and "Be ye sure the Lord He is God; it is He that created us, and not we ourselves." He went on

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quoting that man is higher than the animals, and the earth given him as a trust. Of course he also quoted from the New Testament, especially from the letters of that old Jewish rabbi Saul of Tarsus who changed name and personality when he succumbed to the idea that Jesus of Nazareth was God incarnate, having taken on human flesh and nature to redeem the believers. Frankly, to me the whole thing sounded all too much like one of those awful so-called sermons which we used to hear over the radio before the Society for Public Enlightenment was able to have all this trash thrown out of mass media of entertainment and education. The disturbing thing is that Chris did not make a sermon. All these quotations he used as basis and backbone for what he called a Christian anthropology and cosmology, which according to him has just as much, if not more intellectual respectability as the Rationalist Scheme, and is at the same time a framework for a way of life. The injunction to love your God and your neighbor, to be your brother's keeper, he said, is not just an ethical maxim, but the expression of the wholeness and organic integration of creator and creation which encompasses all that there is. He insisted that our rationalistic picture of reality was too narrow and altogether wrong and was based not so much on facts and principles as on faith, faith in the scientific method. He insisted that man is much more than an animal, and he made a good deal of the soul and the possibility of man to exist in what Christians call the world to come. But what really threw me for a loop was his statement that our objectivity is not really objectivity, but something that is valid only within certain limits and only with respect to what exists within these limits. "Something becomes a fact only if it becomes part of a sensible system of data to each of which a certain kind of importance is ascribed. To ascribe importance you need standards, to obtain standards you have to have values. All facts and all thoughts about them are bound up in such value systems and your so-called objectivity is determined and hedged in by this value system." He admitted that much also for his own cosmology, but he claimed that it is more universal, and that it is not just one concerned with mechanics but with origin, essence, process and goal, and therefore has a truer concept of reality than the scheme of the rationalist, let alone the empirical positivist. It was difficult to make out what Chris said at this point, because people were aroused, and behaved in a not very rational way. It even looked like they might come to blows. A surprisingly large number of the members of the assembly rallied near the platform as if to protect Chris, and I felt that at any moment the meeting might turn into a very undignified brawl. But then a well scented mist issued from the sprinkler system, people calmed down and the meeting was adjourned prematurely. Apparently, the management had used the new happiness drug "Nervosan" in the spray, and it worked very well indeed.

Yours in the holy name of True Objectivity.

Tom

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Morning of the Fourth Day

Dear Harmon:

I could not rest last night, so I called Chris to ask him if I could come to his

## THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR

room. He invited me to join the group that was already assembled. Of course, they were debating the happenings of the afternoon, and Chris was trying to elaborate on some of the points he had made. I asked him why I had never noticed what kind of a radical he was, and why his Christian slip had never shown. He laughed and said, Christians wear no religious slips, and the difference exists in the inner man, if at all. Outwardly one might well find no sign, such as a pious look, ascetic hollows under the eyes, or mumbling of prayers in public places. But he had felt it was his duty to tell about the basic incompatibility of the Christian image of reality and that of the modern rationalist: the two occupy diametrically opposed positions, even if it is often almost impossible to tell the difference in all that lies between the positive and the negative pole, and this not only in such obvious technicalities as the report about the composition of a drop of city water by a Christian and an atheistic chemist, or the description of the meter in Pope's *Essay on Man* by a Christian professor of English literature or by one of the majority. Obviously, such descriptions are independent of the inner convictions of the reporter or analyst. But just as you can make an isotype visible and distinguishable from a co-existing element that seems to be identical but is not, by making it radioactive, so the Christian element in the mass of data between the poles can be made visible when "lit up" by the revealed truth of God. What to the rationalist appears as a mechanistic and logical structure, under the light of the Christian religion reveals itself as a *living* and pulsating entity in which each part and particle has its appointed place. "Credo ut intelligam," he exclaimed, "is the key word indeed. Believe; then you will be able to understand. From then on the logical process works in the same way, but the results are not necessarily the same because Christian and Rationalist often ascribe a different place to the same datum."

I must have had such a look of non-comprehension on my face that Chris laughed. "You see", he said, "that's why you have never noticed anything different in me. We worked on the same material with the same methods, and came up with the same results, and somehow we never hit a nerve, we never were faced by the problem of where to put the results and then having to disagree because of the difference in the basic scheme. "But," he continued, "as you science boys are taking over more and more, there will be more and more clashes. You want to use the earth and the planetary system as your private lab, engineer society as if people were automations and numbers, and we shall have to say 'No, no, you are violating the created order.'" When I asked him how come you have scarcely done anything of the sort so far, he answered that for one thing most Christians knew precious little about their own religion and its cosmological implications, and for another thing the Christian of today has been brought up by and large not under Christian but under rationalistic-humanistic tutelage, and is just starting to wake up to the fact that there is a basic conflict. Chris does not want to abrogate reason, but "put it back into the harness of the team of heart, soul and mind, instead of letting reason perform as the star and take over the whole show." The great difficulty was that the Christian intellectual was usually "getting drunk with logic and the power

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of reason himself." Often he does not yet realize that to be a Christian means to "conform your whole life to the consciousness of the individual's place in relation to creator and the created order of which each person is a particular and at the same time common part." For the modern intellectual it is scandalous to think that faith is not an ornamentation of reason, and that reason has to be the handmaiden of faith (which does not mean that the professor has to be the "servant of the clergy," he added).

To me all this is somehow scandalous, and a slap in the face of our effort to build a reasonable world. Why I report it in so much detail to you, Harmon, is something that I understand as little as I understand Chris's "reasoning." But one must be tolerant. One thing comforts me. Chris himself is of the opinion that he and his friends will always be a minority, and that he has little hope that very many will be willing to sacrifice a more or less comfortable life and status to be confessing professors. But if I know Chris, he will go his way anyhow. I felt more weary and confused by this time than I had in the afternoon, and excused myself. "Well, Tom," Chris said, as I left, "I wonder which it will be 'justification by faith or justification by numbers.'" Does that make sense to you, Harmon?

Your tired,  
Tom

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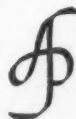
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## Niebuhr in the Conformists' Den

PETER VIERECK

"We live in a paradise of comfort and prosperity, but this paradise is suspended in a hell of global insecurity. This . . . is a parable of the entire human situation: Suffering from ultimate insecurity, whatever its immediate securities . . ."

Reinhold Niebuhr



LET US HERE CONFINE OURSELVES to two aspects of Reinhold Niebuhr: first, his blend of religious conservatism with New Deal social reform; second, the way in which his independent-minded philosophy is threatened by the insidious mass-adulteration of our mechanized age, in which every valid and exciting new insight gets mass-produced, popularized, philistinized from tragic archetype into complacent stereotype. Thus every new anti-conformist victory gets commercialized into one more conformity, not because it gets attacked by the slick spokesmen of mass culture but because it gets embraced by them.

One of the best sources for Niebuhr's ideas are his two series of the Gifford lectures of 1939 at Edinburgh, later published together in 1951 in a convenient one-volume edition, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*. Also important are *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, 1944; *Christian Realism and Political Problems*, 1953; *The Self and the Dramas of History*, 1955.

Compare two photographs: Charles Baudelaire and this angular, harsh-faced professor at the Union Theological Seminary, who for years was pastor of a congregation of automobile workers in Detroit. The eyes of both have the same intensity, the same bitter integrity. Like Kierkegaard, Niebuhr is not merely "painfully sincere" but downright cadaverously sincere. The spiritual demands of his outspoken sermons indict not only the dead rottenness behind a Godless hedonism but also the self-deception behind a facile, overconfident idealism:

The error of our tradition had been to forget that man is a creature as well as creator. . . . Virtue becomes vice through some defect in the virtue. . . . The ironic elements in American history can be overcome, in short, only if American idealism comes to terms with the limits of all human striving. . . . America's moral and spiritual success in relating itself creatively to a world community requires, not so much a guard against the gross vices, about which the idealists warn us, as a re-orientation of the whole structure of our idealism.

(Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*, 1952)

We may define the characteristic Niebuhr synthesis as an attempt to unite material social improvements with a return to a traditional dogmatic Protestantism. This same man, on the same day, can address a socially optimistic rally of "Americans for Democratic Action" and deliver a theologically pessimistic sermon on the innate depravity of all mortal "action," whether American democratic or otherwise.

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Peter Viereck is Professor of Modern European History at Holyoke College and author, as an historian, of *Metapolitics: from the Romantics to Hitler, Conservatism Revisited*, and others. The present paper was given as a lecture while Mr. Viereck occupied the Elliston Poetry Chair at the University of Cincinnati.



### NIEBUHR IN THE CONFORMISTS' DEN

Consequently Niebuhrism has its left and right deviationists. At the point where both invite sarcasm by racing beyond their master's gospel, the former may be labeled the Extroverted Progressors, the latter the Introspective Brooders. Both neglect one or the other of Niebuhr's two wars: the inner war against evil, the outer one against social wrongs.

His *Irony of American History*, 1952, attempted, among other things, to bridge the left-right split. The book exhorted Americans to resist "both the enemy's demonry and our vanities"; that is, to "preserve our civilization" both from our Soviet foe and from our own "human frailties." For, "if we perish, the ruthlessness of the foe would be only the secondary cause. The primary cause would be . . . eyes too blind." Christian spiritual love is Niebuhr's solution for bridging social conscience and other-worldly conscience within ourselves. By loving God and neighbour simultaneously, a return to the original Christian spirit is to end the schizophrenia between the mystical and social parts of human nature.

In politics and economics Niebuhr's viewpoint is more New Deal liberal than Adam Smith liberal. But really his viewpoint implies a third alternative, hard to label. Though supporting most of the economic program of the New Dealers, his motive for supporting their program is more religious, less economic than theirs. His motive is closer to a pre-Marxist Christian socialism than to the materialist pragmatism characterizing many (not all) New Dealers and ADA liberals.

Yet the term "Christian socialist" is likewise misleading for his elusive position. The term suggests a naive optimism about the capacity of mortal bureaucrats to implement Christian social ideals. He is more suspicious of statism than any socialist, Christian or otherwise. And he is more seriously concerned with Protestant theology and spiritual inwardness than was the external and shallow "muscular Christianity" of much of the nineteenth century. Because he carries his humane ideals neither to a this-worldly statist socialism nor to an other-worldly escapist promise of pie in the sky, his pessimism avoids respectively the optimist materialism of the nineteenth century and that century's pseudo-religious, optimist sentimentality.

The gap between Niebuhr's religious, non-statist social democracy (writ small) and the usual materialist, statist Social Democracy (writ large) is the gap between Kierkegaard and Marx. Niebuhr reminds both socialists and businessmen that power is power and hence corrupts, whether labeled "welfare state" or "free enterprise." His synthesis of liberalism and conservatism, like that of Adlai Stevenson, distrusts equally a regimented public statism and what Niebuhr calls the "sometimes quite inordinate powers and privileges" of private wealth. By distrusting both kinds of power equally, these liberal-conservatives, Stevenson and Niebuhr, are in the tradition of the liberal Lord Acton, whose most-quoted remark needs no repetition here, and in the tradition of the conservative Federalist John Adams, who wrote: "Absolute power intoxicates alike despots, monarchs, aristocrats, and democrats."

The closing sections of *The Irony* emphasize foreign policy. Even today, the

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book remains one of the best guides for American thinking on that subject. His aim is peace; not despite that aim but because of it, he warns America against succumbing to fraudulent Soviet "peace" drives. The subsequent "Geneva peace spirit" of 1955 made that warning even more pertinent than when it was first written.

Though his title puts *The Irony* in the singular, five different ironies about America emerge from the book. First, America denounces Marxist materialism, yet America's technical skill is the world's most successful example of materialism. Second, America loves peace, yet has no choice but to protect it with the most militarily destructive weapon in history. Third, America loves Jefferson's ideal of as little political power as possible, yet has had to increase political power hugely in order to limit the huge private economic powers that Jefferson could not foresee. Fourth, our world role has grown so complex and sophisticated that it conflicts with our natural impulse to flee back into the naive isolationism of what Niebuhr calls "American innocence." Fifth, other nations are nobler in theory than in practice; the reverse is true of America, whose proclaimed theories still sound like the selfish profit-materialism of the days of Sumner and McKinley but whose practice today is more often a generous humaneness, both in its social security for the needy at home and in its economic aid abroad. It might not hurt the more indiscriminate distrusters of America in Europe and Asia to study this fifth irony of the book. It is regrettable that Niebuhr did not develop still further the psychological implications of the amazing contrast between the social theories that Americans articulate consciously to explain their behavior and what they unconsciously play-by-ear. Consider only the kind of figures who imagine they are "conservatives"!

Will Herberg, one of America's ablest exponents of Burke, writes in the *New Republic* (May 16, 1955): "Reinhold Niebuhr, for all his involvement in liberal politics—or perhaps precisely *because* of his involvement—is to be counted among the 'neo-conservatives' of our time, who own kinship with Edmund Burke, rather than among the liberals, who draw their inspiration from Tom Paine and the French Enlightenment." The phrase "precisely because" gets at the heart of the Niebuhr synthesis. Most ADA liberals err in giving too little weight to his conservative philosophy. Many new conservatives err in giving too little weight to his co-operation with liberal politics; in their eagerness to propagandise for conservatism and annex names bigger than themselves as converts, they forget that a conservatism overinflated by misleading half-truths degenerates into mere success-hunting and thereby into the most transient of fads. The new conservatism will not establish its many valid insights and important rediscoveries in America until it learns from Niebuhr how to assimilate rather than bait the freedom-sustaining aspects of political liberalism. For liberalism, too, is an essential part (though not, as many liberals think, the only part) of that great, central, liberal-conservative heritage of the American tradition (Locke plus Burke, Jefferson plus John Adams) which both liberals and conservatives should conserve from the totalitarians.

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A really serious philosophical conservatism is never a fashionable fad, never a movement, but a level of historical and cultural insight, a level never attained by more than a lonely few, owing to the pain, the bitterness, the unpopular anti-complacency of that insight. It is an insight, in Niebuhr's words, into "the limits of all human striving, the fragmentariness of all human wisdom, the precariousness of all human configurations of power, the mixture of good and evil in all virtue." A bitter awareness of perpetual evil in history distinguishes conservatives from liberals in philosophy. Perhaps Niebuhr's most important achievement has been to re-establish this awareness, this "deep sadness of history," in terms of our own day. Thereby he is educating his liberal-intellectual readers and followers out of whatever faith in rationalist-progressive utopias may have survived in them from the illusions of the 1930's. In his many books on this theme, *The Self and the Dramas of History*, 1955, gives one of his best brief definitions:

The universal inclination of the self to be more concerned with itself than to be embarrassed by its undue claims may be defined as "original sin." The universality of the inclination is something of a mystery. . . . This bondage of the will to the interests of the self is what is meant by "the bondage of the will" in Christian theory.

Three predictions. Before the end of the decade, Niebuhr will be our most influential social thinker. He will deserve this status because of his insight and integrity. Yet he will have this status thrust upon him not because of his deserts but in spite of them, and because of the accidental confluence of three fads.

The three fads are progressivism, artiness, and the religiosity of a mere fad-conservatism. All three fads overadjust Niebuhr into their respective images because he does unavoidably use their favorite magic words, activating their respective conditioned responses. The magic word "social reform" automatically titillates the progressivism of their political weeklies. The magic word "irony" (title of his book of 1952), not to mention "ambiguity," sets the artiness of their literary quarterlies purring. And when the third magic word, "original sin," flatters their Eliot-steeped sophistication, then snob-ecstasies swoon into a triple consummation: Left-ishly to eat their progress-cake; artily to have it too; and neo-conservatively to spice it with the *frisson* of religious guilt.

Used rigorously and unglibly, "social reform," "irony," and "original sin" are valid terms for needed concepts. It is not Niebuhr's fault when, despite his partly effective counter-measures, these concepts become the pet toys of every intellectual playboy of the western world. The fifteenth century stopped its Niebuhr (Savonarola) by burning him. Today the forces of mere prestige — the tacit Rotarianism of the highbrows — have a more effective method than the stake. They make their victim chic. They did it already to Baudelaire, they did it to Kierkegaard, they did it to Kafka: fashionableness is the ambush endangering the wise and good message of Reinhold Niebuhr.

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## Books and Publications

### Karl Heim on Christian Faith and Natural Science

IAN G. BARBOUR

ARL HEIM HAS BEEN CALLED the dean of German Protestant theologians. But in contrast to most theologians, and almost uniquely among those who share his existentialist orientation, Heim has an interest in science and a thorough understanding of developments in modern physics which this volume<sup>1</sup> and its more technical sequel<sup>2</sup> reveal. His major contribution concerning "*thinking in spaces*" is an illuminating insight. Before indicating Heim's proposal (Secs. II and III below) we will attempt to analyze the problem in a somewhat wider setting than is given in his introductory chapter.

#### I. The Problem of Scientific and Religious World-Views

The scientist asks: what place is left for the activity of God in a universe determined by natural causation and inflexible law? The Christian professor asks: within a Christian world-view, what is the place of the natural order which is the object of his research? The university community asks: are the methods of science applicable in the sphere of religious concerns? The inquiring layman asks: what is the meaning of God's transcendence in an unbounded cosmos? All these questions raise in differing forms the problem of God's relationship to the world which science studies.

1. The problem of God's *transcendence* has in man's history taken many forms. In an earlier era God could be envisaged as literally "above" and "beyond" the world. *Spatial images* in the Bible are frequent (e.g. heaven and hell, Christ's ascension, etc.) and have been a major concern of several biblical scholars. Bultmann<sup>3</sup> has sought to "*demythologize*," or reinterpret what he sees as the deeper truths of man's personal existence and relation to God, apart from the thought-forms and world-view of the first century; in particular he feels that transcendence, often biblically expressed as *quantitative* enlargement, refers basically to *qualitative* difference.

God, man, and the world had their places in the earlier cosmological scheme. With Copernicus there started the displacement of man's position and God's which biology and astronomy have continued. Newton required God only to start his world machine, and occasionally to readjust its slight irregularities. The activity of the God of deism was pushed further and further back in time, and with respect to space there seemed to arise, as Strauss put it, "an insoluble housing-problem for God." In the unbounded (though probably not infinite) universe of modern astronomy, what meaning are we now to give the 'super' of "*supernatural*"?

One type of answer escapes the problem by *identifying* God with the world-process. Thus Giordano Bruno, among the first to take seriously the idea of an infinite universe, is driven to Pantheism; Spinoza equates God's operation with



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the total causal nexus; and Schleiermacher, father of modern liberal theology, fails to distinguish clearly between natural causation and divine activity. Monistic views may retain God's immanence, but they are forced, materialist and idealist alike, to weaken the transcendence of the biblical God who is "other than" man and the world. If we reject such identification of God with the world, what symbols of transcendence are consonant with modern cosmology?

2. A second aspect of the scientific world-view which has been an obstacle to religious faith is the belief that the world, including man himself, is governed by inflexible and *impersonal natural laws*. Biblical faith saw God acting at many points in daily life; nature and history were His direct instruments. But science assumes only "natural causes" are to be admitted; even the smallest detail is determined by natural forces. Psychology has invaded the last stronghold, man's "inner life," and investigated its laws. How can God act in such a universe?

It needs to be pointed out, of course, that certain aspects of the prevalent world-view are not conclusions of science but naturalistic philosophical pre-suppositions. The view that nature is purposeless, meaningless, and blind is clearly a value-judgment rather than an empirical datum. W. T. Stace<sup>4</sup> has delineated some of the ways in which science has had a psychological, though not logical, impact on modern thought. Mechanical explanation, for example, does not preclude explanation in terms of purpose. Science, to be sure, is concerned with cause-effect (or "functional dependence") relations, and on its own level its explanation may be complete and without gaps; but this is irrelevant to explanation in terms either of purpose or of purposelessness. Yet the Christian must go on to ask: how are *God's purposes and activity* related to *natural laws*?

3. A third aspect of the problem, especially significant for the Christian professor today, concerns the range of applicability of *the methods of science*. Heim does not explicitly discuss the question of knowledge. Yet what he calls the non-objective aspects of reality, namely the ego and God, are to him beyond the range of scientific investigation. We must turn then to his analysis of the relation of scientific and religious aspects of reality.

### II. Three Modes of Being: World, Ego, and God.

Most of Heim's book is devoted to differentiating and characterizing these three aspects of existence. He refers to them variously as "regions," "realms," or "orders" of reality; some might call them "aspects of experience," but Heim is concerned with them not as facets of consciousness but as modes of being. (Half-way through the book he starts to call them "spaces," a concept to which we will devote a subsequent section.)

1. *The Ego and the World* is the title of his first division, which contrasts these two modes of being. The ego is directly and immediately known; it is, as Eddington has said, the one point at which I see reality from within instead of

externally. The ego is non-objective, "the invisible spectator not itself a part of the contents of consciousness." The essential self, Heim emphasizes, lies beyond the range of scientific investigation. Like Kant's cognitive ego, it is at once set apart from all else by a deep gulf (the subject of knowing can never be the object of knowledge) and yet it can never be detached as a separate entity or considered in isolation.

Heim's presentation develops themes common to Heidegger, Buber and other existentialist writers, questions of death, guilt, freedom, and destiny. He analyzes the I-Thou encounter with another subject, contrasting with all I-It relations to objective things. The difference between objective and non-objective he further illustrates with respect to our understanding of *time*. Physical time is uniform and mathematically reversible, its "now" an arbitrary point moving along a time-scale where future is essentially like past. But in the time of selfhood one moment, *now*, is set apart from all others, and crystallized past is unlike molten future.

Already we see the answer to one of our initial problems, the insignificance of man in the stretches of stellar time and space. For the self stands "outside all spatial and temporal dimensions" (p. 123); it belongs to a different order, which cannot be evaluated in quantitative terms against the immensity of the cosmos. Moreover, the all-sufficiency of the methods of science has been challenged in the claim to an area with which scientific investigation cannot deal.

2. *God* belongs to yet a third order of existence, with which the last division of the book is concerned. Both world and ego are characterized by tension and conflict, by the mutual exclusion of either/or. This is a *polar* world where positive and negative both oppose and cooperate for electricity to flow. This is a world in which man either finds all values relative and ends in nihilism, or absolutizes some aspect of his life and ends in idolatry. God's existence, in contrast, is characterized as *suprapolar*.

Like the self, God is known directly and immediately. Discovery of Him, says Heim, is not our achievement, but a "gift which comes to us," as "the scales suddenly fall from our eyes." He is discovered only in our lives, not by inference from the objective world. Questions of my origin and destiny only I can ask and only in asking will I realize that the answer is no "neuter noun" or "anything pertaining to the objective world," but one who confronts me as "Thou."

### III. The Analogy of Spaces

We have purposely avoided using the term "spaces" up to this point, because if one is to evaluate the usefulness of an analogy one must have a clear idea of the situation *to which* the term is applied (the three modes of being above) as well as the situation *from which* the term was derived.

1. Heim gives a short summary of the current understanding of *physical spaces* (pp. 124f), and a good exposition of the four-dimensional space-time continuum is included in his sequel<sup>5</sup>, but the following attempt at a brief explanation is my own. The geometrical properties of possible space-structures were considered by mathe-

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maticians a century ago. It was known that figures on a curved surface differ from those of Euclidian geometry (e.g. parallel lines, such as those north from the equator, do meet). Here we can also visualize the surface itself as curved in a third dimension, but a 2-dimensional being, or a map-maker, could describe the properties of figures on the basis of new axioms and by the construction of a mathematical formalism which would be greatly simplified by introducing an "imaginary" third variable. Similarly Riemann worked out from non-Euclidian postulates a consistent geometry which would describe relations in three-dimensional space by mathematical representation in *four spatial* dimensions. Recent astronomical observations appear to indicate that such non-Euclidian relationships do in fact hold in our universe.

Moreover there is much experimental evidence verifying relativity theory concerning the inseparability of *temporal* and spatial dimensions. Einstein postulated that both time and distance measurements depend on the observer's frame of reference, though there is a quantity, the "interval" involving a combination of time and space, which is always constant in describing the same events. Is *four-space* (the matrix of 3 spatial and 1 temporal dimensions) "real"? Does a moving rod "actually" contract? Of course not, you say, for to an observer staying with the rod no possible motion will change its length. Are higher dimensions then merely diagrammatic constructions of "appearances"? No, as Eddington has said:

"Nothing whatever has happened to the rod, the object in the external world. Its length has altered, but length is not an intrinsic property of the rod, since it is quite indeterminate until some observer is specified. . . . Thus length and duration are relations of things in the external world to some specified observer."

4-space, then, has the same validity as any other scientific construct, such as psi-function or momentum. A tremendous simplification and orderliness in understanding the relationships of physical measurements results from its use. Because we cannot visualize higher dimensions, they seem mysterious and other-worldly; to the scientist however they have neither more nor less reality than other physical concepts. They always refer to measurement of the relationship of events, since space and time are themselves never directly observable.

2. What then are some of the *characteristics* of physical "spaces" which seem to Heim to rend the concept valuable as an analogy to the modes of being? a.) The concept of "space" is always a *relational* term involving subject and object. "Space is not an *ens*, a being, a reality, a 'thing in itself.' It is a relation into which a reality enters with respect to me." (p. 133) It is a structural form, rather than a specific content; it is a continuum within which events occur. b.) A space need not necessarily be visualized; we can use multi-dimensioned spaces without being able to picture or imagine them. c.) A higher space may reflect itself within lower spaces in *paradoxical* behaviour, such as the meeting of parallel lines on a sphere. (One might mention also the "wave-particle" dualism in atomic physics, or the more general "Principle of Complementarity"; features which are contradictory when any visualizable model is

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attempted can all be included in the mathematical representation of quantum mechanics.) d.) The same events may be *differently ordered* in various spaces, for each space embraces the whole universe in its own framework. There is no boundary of content between them, for each is an infinite continuum in its own dimension and includes the whole of reality in that aspect (e.g., the dimensions of sight and sound).

3. Heim extends the concept of spaces as developed in physics to refer to the "ego-space" of selfhood and the "supra-polar space" of God. The four characteristics of physical spaces above, he sees as characteristic also of the relationship between the modes of being (Sec. II above). On what basis, we must ask, does Heim apply the concept of "spaces" to God? Is his use of the term literal, inferential, or analogical? This reviewer considers Heim's use of "spaces" to be *analogical*, though such an interpretation is a middle ground between two extremes to both of which Heim has appeared to lend support. a.) Writing twenty years ago in *God Transcendent*<sup>7</sup>, Heim disavowed any possibility of analogy:

"The movement we execute when we reach out beyond ourselves to find God must be differentiated from our dimensional and paradoxical distinctions, and from all intramundane relations of transcendence, no less than from distinctions between contents in the same space."<sup>8</sup>

God was "the Wholly Other," *sui generis*, beyond any comparison even of spaces; here was the Barthian theme of absolute transcendence. Heim at that time specifically rejected "a simple transference of the idea of dimensions to God," who is "beyond all spaces." Although his extensive discussion of dimensional transcendence could hardly have failed to convey the impression that he saw some resemblance to divine transcendence, Heim rejected any such comparison. b.) But in his more recent writing, he seems sometimes to go to the opposite extreme. The reader may feel he is being shown a hierarchy of spaces by which man can climb with ease from physics to God. The 4-space of physics achieves on some pages a quite exalted status, as when Heim makes the debatable assertion that because it has no absolute time system it is "timeless" and "eternal," or writes:

"The potentiality which is able to actualize itself in the vast range of mathematically related systems, and the non-temporal regulative source which permits of development into the different time scales, are to us further manifestations of the omnipotence, omnipresence, and eternity of the world-ground from which our own personal existence proceeds."<sup>9</sup>

c.) Heim's basic position, however, appears to lie between these extremes. He believes that physics can at best only bring a person to a frontier where it is easier for him to raise existential questions which science cannot answer. "Natural science has no bearing on the choice" between basic world views<sup>10</sup>. This is not an argument from science to God, then, or an inference from the laws of physics. Faith, the "revelation of supra-polar space," comes as a gift; only then will one see the analogy.

4. One of the issues which this analogy of "spaces" helps illuminate is the pos-

sibility of combining *transcendence* and *immanence* in the God who is "high and lifted up" yet "nearer than hands and feet." Within one space these two aspects seem contradictory. Theology has tried to preserve both God's continuity with the world and His discontinuity, but has often swung towards a monistic pantheism on the one hand, or on the other hand towards a dualism that saw the world as evil or infinitely separated from God. But if God and world occupy two "*spaces*," they are incommensurable, separated by "an infinite qualitative distinction," yet they are inseparable and interpenetrating.

Furthermore, the *same events* may be differently ordered in different spaces, in accordance with different structural laws. "An occurrence, of which we fully understand the natural causes . . . at the same time appears to us an act of God." As long as we thought in terms of one space, Heim suggests, God's activity could only be a force intervening from above into an autonomous cosmic process. But now temporal and divine activity do not appear mutually exclusive.

#### IV. Alternative Representations of Transcendence

Is Heim's symbolism of "spaces" a helpful representation of God's transcendence and relationship to the world? We might compare it with three other suggestions (of which Heim himself actually uses two):

1. Among writers influenced by *process philosophy*, or taking their clue from the field of biology rather than physics, the idea of transcendence has often been interpreted by analogy with the relation of levels of organization in organisms.<sup>11</sup> Each such level has a characteristic unity in which lower levels participate without violation of their laws (e.g. the laws of cell growth transcend, though they do not contradict, those of molecular physics; man's freedom and his mental and spiritual capacities do not violate, but rather use and are inseparable from, his bio-chemical structure, etc.). There is thus both continuity and discontinuity in this graded structure of reality. Instead of trying to account for a higher level by reducing it to the categories of a lower level, each level has its own valid principles of interpretation.

The relation of God's activity to the laws of nature is interpreted by these writers in an analogous manner. God's activity incorporates lower levels of reality without abrogating them. Some authors following this approach have called themselves Neonaturalists and have rejected God's personality and transcendence of nature; He is a cosmic force, the creative process itself, or a characteristic of events in that process.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand personal theists such as Temple have stressed the transcendence of personal purpose over any of its expressions; they have spoken of a two-way interaction, with the spiritual richness of the being of God as "in some measure constituted by the moral achievements of His temporal creatures."<sup>13</sup> The world is His "medium of self-actualization." Process philosophy and biology, as well as the "analogy of spaces," thus suggest contemporary categories in which to express the combination of transcendence and immanence, although often divine



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immanence receives the greater emphasis from process thinkers.

2. A second approach to God's relation to the natural order has started by noting the *changing view of nature*, which now appears more "open" and dynamic. Heim's second volume<sup>2</sup> is devoted to these changes, especially the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle. Within the probability-distribution of a variable such as the position of an orbital electron it is impossible to predict the value of an individual measurement. Heim believes that this is a point at which God's activity impinges on the natural order.

"No quantum-jump happens without your Father in heaven. . . . All events, however great, we now know to be the cumulation of decisions which occur in the infinitesimal realm."<sup>14</sup>

Now the question of whether a breakdown in causality is implied in the quantum-mechanical description has been much debated. I have summarized the evidence and considered its relevance to the problem of freedom elsewhere.<sup>15</sup> Quite apart from the question of whether the uncertainty may not be introduced by the process of observation, or due to lack of knowledge of more detailed physical mechanisms, such as those proposed by Bohm,<sup>16</sup> one must ask whether acausality or random chance have any relation to freedom, human or divine, which involves choice and will.

3. A third type of analogy of transcendence makes use of *personal categories*. In the relationship between two people, we can speak of a sort of immanence that does not endanger transcendence; one individual can be present in the life of another and yet each has an independent existence. In the response of one person to another there is neither coercive determination without freedom nor complete independence without influence. Heim's earlier book<sup>7</sup> does in fact develop the concept of transcendence in the personal realm. Moreover, examples from human relationships seem to supply more illuminating analogies of *methods of knowing* than are to be found in dimensional analogies. While the observer does play a central role in relativity, he acts as spectator without involvement as person. But the character of other people is only discovered by personal involvement, by love and trust.

Man's experience of confrontation by God has always suggested personal categories, though he has realized the limitations of such expressions. God's "transcendence" expresses moral factors, such as the "distance" between holiness and sin, the "separation" which awe and reverence express, the "otherness" of mystery and of judgment. His "immanence" includes fellowship with man, presence and activity ("the Holy Spirit") in human life. There is also transcendence and immanence of value, of beauty, and of goodness. Personal and moral categories seem indispensable.

## V. Evaluation

1. Heim's analogy of spaces appears to this reader to have certain *limitations*:  
a.) There is a danger from the *way* in which it is presented by Heim that his proposal be taken as an explanation or a definitive answer. Heim is, it seems, using

## THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR

a scientific concept to develop a new image for the natural-supernatural relationship. (The distinction between symbol and analogy or image is neither clear-cut nor the subject of unanimous agreement; analogy usually implies a more detailed analytical comparison of two situations, whereas an image is a non-conceptual quasi-sensual representation as a gestalt. "Supra-polar space" cannot of course be visualized, yet in thinking of God does it not function as an image?) Images inevitably play a part in *organizing* and *interpreting* religious experience and in understanding God's self-disclosure in Christ. An image will be valuable if it illuminates and helps us express what has happened to us. Perhaps this means on the one hand that we need not completely discard biblical images of transcendence if we recognize, as many thinkers did long before the Copernican revolution, that they are metaphorical in character. And on the other hand we must avoid taking too literally any new categories for expressing God's relation to the world. If He is *sui generis*, we must always point to the inadequacy as well as the usefulness of our analogies.

b.) There are, however, other limitations inherent in the particular *scientific terms* Heim has employed. The "fourth dimension," for those unfamiliar with modern physics, has an aura of occult mysteries;<sup>17</sup> even when one can perform the mathematical manipulations, the physical and philosophical implications are often difficult to grasp. We have noted already that the higher dimensions of modern physics, though not necessarily visualizable, are always related to physical measurements and are metrical coordinates, algebraically expressible. They are physical and impersonal concepts, and hence seem only partially to answer Heim's original objection to the use of spatial metaphors for God's transcendence. Moreover his own discussion has stressed the inability of science to deal with the "non-objective" modes of being.

c.) Heim himself recognizes another respect in which the concept of spaces is limited. He indicates that it can only refer to *form rather than content*, describing a "sphere of operation" or a "structure for activity" for God, without indicating the nature or purpose of that activity (e.g. the demonic as well as the divine operates through that structure). Furthermore there are philosophical questions here that cannot be avoided. Is Heim talking primarily about different ways of knowing or about different structures of reality? Some critics might feel that he has turned epistemological distinctions into metaphysical ones. As an existentialist Heim speaks about the relationship of God and man rather than about God as He is in Himself; and as an interpreter of relativity he sees the importance of the observer and his frame of reference in any knowledge of the physical world. Are "spaces" descriptive then both of the knowing process *and* of what can be known? Perhaps an explicit statement of epistemological presuppositions would have been helpful.

2. If these limitations are recognized, Heim's analogy of space provides *illuminating suggestions* with respect to the problems with which we started. We have indicated (Sec. III-4) its usefulness as a way of indicating that transcendence and immanence are not necessarily mutually exclusive. We mentioned also that the same

## BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

event may be differently ordered in various frames of reference, and pointed to the relevance of this insight for the problem of the relation of God's activity in the laws of nature. If we recognize that Heim is not trying to prove the existence of God, we can accept his argument as a valuable attempt to provide intellectual ground for the possibility of revelation. We can use "thinking in space" as a significant symbol of transcendence without denying that there may be important insights in other approaches (e.g. process philosophy and personal concepts) which should not be neglected. Heim himself, while giving the concept of spaces an exclusive role in representing transcendence, actually relies primarily on his more personal existential analysis for most of the categories in which to express the Gospel.

A crucial task in every age is the expression of the Christian faith in terms comprehensible to the contemporary culture, without distorting the basic message of the Gospel. Today this will involve the use of the categories of science, yet awareness of the limitations of impersonal concepts. A closely related task is the development of a comprehensive picture of reality; for the Christian faculty member this means relating the religious and scientific world views. Karl Heim, in this rewarding and stimulating book, has made an important contribution to both tasks. Perhaps we should be surprised neither that irreducible differences between science and religion must still be recognized, nor that new insights have emerged from the meeting of ideas from two areas of thought which are usually isolated from each other.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>K. Heim, *Christian Faith and Natural Science*, (Harpers, 1953). Page references not otherwise specified are from this volume.

<sup>2</sup>K. Heim, *The Transformation of the Scientific World-View*, (Harpers, 1953).

<sup>3</sup>See *Kerygma and Myth*, H. Bartsch, ed. (London, S.P.C.K., 1953).

<sup>4</sup>W. T. Stace, *Religion and the Modern Mind*, (Lippincott, 1952).

<sup>5</sup>*Transformation*, p. 67f.

<sup>6</sup>Eddington, *Space, Time and Gravitation*, (Cambridge, 1921) p. 34.

<sup>7</sup>K. Heim, *God Transcendent*, (Nisbet, London, 1935).

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid*, p. 205.

<sup>9</sup>*Transformation*, p. 112.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid*, p. 117.

<sup>11</sup>See e.g. W. Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, (MacMillan, 1934).

L. Thornton, *The Incarnate Lord*, (Longman's, 1928).

C. Hartshorne, *Reality as Social Process*, (Beacon Press, 1953).

<sup>12</sup>See e.g. H. N. Wieman, *The Source of Human Good*, (Chicago, 1946) or B. Loomer, "Christian Faith and Process Philosophy" in *Journal of Religion*, 29, 181 (1949).

<sup>13</sup>Temple, *Op. Cit.*, p. 481.

<sup>14</sup>*Transformation*, p. 156.

<sup>15</sup>I. Barbour "Indeterminacy and Freedom; a Reappraisal," *Philosophy of Science*, 22, 8 (1955).

<sup>16</sup>D. Bohm, *Physical Review*, 85, 166 (1952).

<sup>17</sup>See e.g. D. Emmet, *The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking*, (MacMillan, London, 1949) p. 210f.

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#### BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

*An Existentialist Theology, A Comparison of Heidegger and Bultmann.* By John Macquarrie. London: SCM Press, 1955, xxi, 252 pages.

Among other things, the current revival of theology within Protestant Christianity has led to more intense consideration of an ancient problem—the relation between philosophy and theology. The problem becomes increasingly important in view of the fact that Protestant Christianity has never created for itself any such final and authoritative theory of their relation as is to be found in the thought of Thomas Aquinas. The Reformed churches, consequently, have had to reconsider the problem anew in every period, and the fact that it has not been satisfactorily solved within the framework of Protestantism has been and still is a great hindrance to theological thought.

Macquarrie's short but provocative account of certain aspects of Heidegger's thought and its bearing upon Bultmann's theology of the New Testament serves to focus attention upon the basic problem in both its specific and generic form. The book consists in exposition, with interspersed criticism, of the human situation as seen from the perspective of Heidegger's philosophy, followed by an account of authentic human existence from the standpoint of Christianity as it appears in Bultmann's theology. Macquarrie is concerned to follow Bultmann's interpretation of the New Testament in order to see exactly where it is conditioned by Heidegger's analysis, and then to decide whether Bultmann has been helped or hindered by his philosophical orientation. The verdict is that an existential *type* philosophy is both relevant and even indispensable for a sound and intelligible theology.

Since a full scale critical discussion is precluded by lack of space, I must confine attention to several criticisms advanced against Bultmann and to the listing of certain other noteworthy points.

Three main criticisms of Bultmann are advanced; first, he is accused of paying too little attention to what is sometimes called the "historical element in Christianity" and at other times the "objective-historical" as opposed to the "existential-historical"; secondly, he is said to overemphasize the anthropological element in Christian theology and thus to lose a "residual" theological meaning which cannot be translated into purely existential terms; and thirdly, the charge is that he has retained too much of "an old fashioned liberal modernism," particularly in the interpretation of miraculous events. These criticisms, it should be remembered, are advanced by the author within a wider framework of agreement with the general drift of Bultmann's approach and conclusions.

As regards the first point, if Macquarrie means that Bultmann is still so concerned over the destructive possibilities of the "higher criticism" that he is somewhat too anxious to free faith from dependence upon the results of historical research, he is right, although inconsistent, since he is himself even more anxious to assure this freedom to theology (page 179n.) than Bultmann is. The author



seems unaware of the tremendous tension within Bultmann's thought between his sound historical conscience (Bultmann is, after all, a biblical critic of the first rank) and his concern that the existential impact of the religious content shall not be lost in the relativities of historical research. On the other hand, Macquarrie in other places seems to think that Bultmann is *not* guilty of denying the "objective-historical" after all (pages 189, 191), because he does maintain that the basis of the "existential-historical" must always be concrete events. The entire discussion (pages 159ff.) is inconclusive, since it neglects so much of Bultmann's analysis of historical knowledge and research, his view of the relation between event and interpretation, myth and symbol. This is the most serious defect of the book and it is due to the inexplicable neglect of Kant and his influence. Both Bultmann and Heidegger are Kantians, and it is only if this fact is taken into account that one understands why they must deal with problems falling within the domain called "transcendent" by Kant, in a manner which does not violate the Kantian strictures against substantive knowledge of the supersensible. Hence the importance of the phenomenology of existence in Heidegger and of myth and symbol in Bultmann.

As regards the second point, there are two considerations; one is the question whether Heidegger's thought implies the identity of *being* and *human being* and consequently whether the whole content of his philosophy is exhausted in philosophical anthropology, and the other is whether Bultmann would hold that theology must be rigorously confined to the religious problem of man and his ultimate destiny, so that what Macquarrie means by "residual" content would have to be regarded as illegitimate because speculative and not "existential." This second question is particularly important because the answer determines the extent to which Bultmann admits ontological elements within theology proper or whether the ontological elements are to be confined to the preparatory analysis which is a prelude to the Christian answer.

As regards the third point, Bultmann is undoubtedly in the right. Macquarrie falls too easily into step with those current theologians who make sport of the rugged scientific conscience of liberal theology upon the grounds that it is now possible to maintain an "open" instead of a "closed" universe. This view does not face fairly the problem involved, because even a so-called "open" universe (which, incidentally, is not "open" enough to permit the entry of all that is demanded by neo-orthodox theologians claiming to base faith upon the "historical") has a structure, and this means that not everything which human beings may fancy can happen in that universe. Without structure there would be no reliable knowledge of the sort called historical, and in that case, we may ask, what happens to the "historical foundations" of Christianity? Bultmann, in rejecting a world view which is no longer consistent with the best of our current knowledge, is to be commended for taking an honest stand on a problem of perennial difficulty.

Other points to be noticed are these: Macquarrie deals too simply with the

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problem of the particular philosophy to be employed in the interpretation of Christianity by saying that existential thought is not a doctrine or a particular philosophy but a *type* of philosophizing (cf. pages 32, 238); the author is to be commended for not yielding to the contention of Copleston and others that the problem of God does not arise on the phenomenological level (page 73); Macquarrie seems unaware of the ambiguous character of much current theology (as represented by Brunner, Vincent Taylor and others) when it claims to be basing itself upon historical foundations—the question must be raised as to the consistency of a position which appeals to a naive realistic theory of historical events in order to confound idealist philosophy, but retreats behind a very sophisticated “existential” type of history when attacking biblical critics within Christianity who want historical reconstruction instead of theological construction; the too simple contrast between “substantial” ways of thinking and “existential” (as if existential, historical life were not itself a way of being) ways of thinking is erroneous (see page 46) and, when pressed to the extreme, amounts to a type of positivism within theology; especially helpful and uncommonly good as an exposition is the author’s explanation of many points in Heidegger’s thought.

Macquarrie’s book is important because it serves to call attention to a theme of the first importance at the present time. It does, however, raise more problems than it solves and, contrary to the usual rhetoric accompanying such a judgment, a book of which this can be said is not ultimately successful.

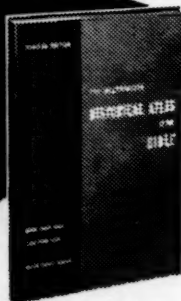
JOHN E. SMITH

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## Reports and Notices

### Faculty Thinking on the University Question

No one can speak for "the faculty mind." Yet the fairly extensive observations of one man may reveal some symptoms, particularly when there are no discernable differences of attitude in different parts of the country. A certain rather limited range of attitudes can be detected and described, and the description is generally applicable.

It seems to be universally true that there is no firmly held conviction about the nature of the university among either non-Christians or Christians. There is no pervading sense of any defensible interpretation of the university.

The most obvious result of this lack is the splintering of the university's life. Less obvious is the fact that the faculties seem to have no position to stand on to defend themselves against the less important or alien influence on the university. The essential life of the university is determined by forces apart from the educational program.

As both cause and effect of this situation, the teachers turn in on their own work. This withdrawal of energy and attention from the center of the university's life increases the power of the non-intellectual forces so, increasingly, basic decisions are made elsewhere than in the faculty. This very withdrawal is a source of strength as well as weakness. It makes the faculty ingrown but it also makes possible the full development of the separate disciplines.

Another condition determining faculty attitudes is the mass of demands on their time. Since they have no coherent doctrine of the university, they have no

way of defending themselves against the encroachments of an administration that often exploits them for, even, simple clerical tasks. On the other hand, having no sense of the university or their rightful place in it, they are unable to yield control at any point to simple administrative decision. Most of the major decisions in the university are made in the interaction of non-intellectual forces, but all the minor ones must be made by faculty committees.

So, between the noble work of a responsible professional life within a discipline and the often necessary, often ignoble work of carrying on the life of the university, there is rarely time to consider what the university ought to be.

These are conditions generally applicable to academics. There are other restrictions which apply directly to the Christian teacher. Since his intellectual nourishment has been found within the "secular" professional community his purposes and his standards are the same as his non-Christian colleague. Probably the responsibility for this condition rests with the church which attempted to force the works of the mind into its own molds. Intellectuals have reason for mistrusting the church.

This may, in fact, be the proper position for the Christian to take. Most Christian teachers do, for reasons which have nothing to do with their faith. With few exceptions the position is not held on the basis of an articulate Christian faith but solely as a consequence of attitudes of the professional community. Thus devout Christians give

## THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR

a remarkable authority over their lives to standards and methods which are usually outside the faith. As a consequence there is no "definable community of Christian concern."

There is, generally speaking, an uneasy conscience among Christian teachers largely as a result of the various critiques of the university that came out during the 1940s and a consequent awareness of a thorough ignorance about the Christian faith. There is a general confusion about the nature of Christianity, which can only result in general confusion about the function of Christianity in the academic life and about the nature of any organization that sets itself to determine that function. For this reason most campus faculty groups have set themselves to the preparatory task of studying the nature of Christianity through its basic documents and institutions. The only objection to be made to this indispensable process is that too many such groups take this study as an end in itself and thereby shield themselves from any further professional responsibility.

That there should be confusion at this stage in the work of the faculty Christian movement is understandable and excusable. The movement is young and still unsure of itself. Less excusable is the lack of real responsibility which generally accompanies this confusion. There is strong and legitimate concern for the integrity of modern scholarship. There is rarely any comparable concern for the integrity of Christian commitment. There is little sense of the stringency of the Christian imperative. If Christ is the Lord of Life he deserves

nothing less than total dedication of this part of life.

This does not define the nature of that dedication. The Lordship of Christ does not necessarily mean the tyranny of the church or of theology over the rest of the created order. This writer would contend, in the common discussion, that such Lordship requires the integrity of the orders, for otherwise Christian liberty becomes meaningless. Others contend, in the same discussion which is the life of the movement, that there is real discontinuity, by nature, between Christianity and the natural orders which are the material of the university.

Yet those who here express this last position hold it and express it from within the community of concern. They are not using it as an excuse to evade responsibility. Unfortunately, too many people concerned with the aims of the movement use their fears or their theology as a defense against the hard work of professional responsibility. They withhold themselves from the common life of the community or deny to it any function beyond the most general. They refuse it their time and their energies without a responsible attempt to articulate the grounds of their refusal.

This is a bleak view and its adequacy is limited by the limits of one man's powers of observation. But it is that one man's view of the situation at the moment: a widespread concern varying in intensity which is yet unwilling to express itself in full professional dedication.

John W. Dixon, Jr.



## Don's Advisory Group Conference Mansfield College, Oxford

The Dons' Advisory Group of the Student Christian Movement sponsored a conference on the theme, "Contemporary Philosophy and Christian Belief" which was held at Mansfield College, Oxford, April 13-17, 1956. The list of members totalling some 80 names, included philosophers and theologians from all over England and Scotland and the sessions were well attended by people who came ready and willing to participate in a vigorous way. The general chairman of all sessions, Canon T. R. Milford, Chancellor of Lincoln Cathedral, contributed immensely to the entire program by the manner in which he directed discussion, summarized the results of debate and divided the available time so as to give adequate opportunity for the expression of various points of view.

The principal talk (there were actually no formally read papers, most speakers speaking from notes) was given by Professor John Wisdom of Cambridge University and the position he adopted was very much along the line of a recent and much discussed article which he has written under the title of "Gods." It is clear that so far as Mr. Wisdom's brand of empiricism is concerned, it is very much broader and more responsive to the whole range of the religious and esthetic elements than the sort of empiricism which Dewey once defined as the classical British type.

Other talks were given by Professor Antony Flew of North Staffordshire, and Rev. D. Austin Farrer, Canon Ramsey and Mr. Bernard Williams all

of Oxford. Brief opening comments were made at the first session by Mr. Peter Alexander of Leeds, Mr. P. T. Geach of Birmingham and myself.

All papers, with the exception of one or two, were written against the background of contemporary analytic philosophy and it was frankly stated at the outset that "contemporary philosophy" meant not only this analytic type but the particular brand of it current in Oxford.

Of particular interest to readers of *The Christian Scholar* who participated in the F.C.F. Conference on a similar theme held at Denison University in June 1955 (the June 1956 issue of *The Christian Scholar* carried some of the papers from the Denison Conference) are the following points:

- 1) The absence within the Church of England (the situation is different for the non-Anglican communions) of any body of systematic theology such as the Lutheran and Calvinist traditions possess makes it very difficult to identify the theological voice and standpoint in discussions with philosophy. On this account, many English theologians are inclined to allow themselves to be drawn into discussion of theological issues which actually contain highly complex metaphysical problems, simply upon the basis of the "ordinary" meaning of the language used to express both theological and philosophical concepts.

- 2) Whereas many different metaphysical positions were represented at Denison, the Oxford approach is to begin by eschewing all metaphysics (i.e.

"non-empirical" speculation) in order to remain entrenched, without prior criticism, within the main assumptions of the British empirical philosophy supposedly enshrined in the "ordinary" uses of language. Moreover, such usage no longer makes any pretense to being that of the so-called ordinary man; it is the established "ordinary" usage of the small group of philosophers who carry on this sort of analysis.

3) There is a greater willingness in England on the part of both philosophers and theologians to enter into discussion than seems to be the case in America.

4) The issue between an approach like

that of Barth which rejects philosophy and one like that of Tillich which maintains that philosophy is essential was not a central one at the Oxford meeting, whereas at Denison it was of great importance in all discussions.

In addition to the contribution made by the speakers, the success of the conference was due in large measure to the planning and efforts of Professor Michael Foster of Christ Church, Oxford, the Chairman of the Dons' Group and to the Secretary, Rev. David L. Edwards.

John E. Smith

## W.S.C.F. Triennial Meetings

The Triennial meetings of the World's Student Christian Federation were held during August in Germany, with twenty-six persons from America participating in them. Three members of the Commission on Christian Higher Education staff were among the American delegates — Herluf Jensen, Executive Secretary of the United Student Christian Council; Richard Heaton, Executive Secretary of the Interseminary Movement; and J. Edward Dirks, Editor of *The Christian Scholar*. The other American delegates were primarily the representatives of the student Christian movements and college work departments of the churches and the YMCA and YWCA, which together comprise the federation of the U.S.C.C.

The W.S.C.F. meetings were in three parts. The first, an Ecumenical Student Christian Conference, was held in Mannheim with three hundred representatives. Two hundred of these were German

students, equally divided between East and West Germany, and the other one hundred were from some fifty other countries. Three consultations met for another week at Mannheim to consider questions concerning racial, political and university issues; these were preparatory to the work of the General Committee.

The major meeting was that of the General Committee, the primary representative body of the W.S.C.F., responsible for the overall policies and program of the Federation. This was attended by more than one hundred representatives of the national student Christian movements which are united in the W.S.C.F.; it was held at the Evangelical Academy in Tutzing, near Munich. The theme of the meeting this year was "Jesus Christ the Reconciler."

A further report of these meetings and their significance will be contained in a future issue of this journal.

## Men to Aid Colleges

The Commission on Christian Higher Education recently announced the formal constituting of the "National Committee of Church Men for Church Colleges." The Committee is dedicated to telling the story and helping in every way possible the church colleges.

The Committee was called together by the invitation of a Joint Strategy Committee appointed by the Commission on Christian Higher Education and the General Department of United Church Men. It is constituted as an independent body that will work in close relation with the Department of Christian Institutions of the Commission on Christian Higher Education of the National Council of Churches.

The Committee will not do any money-raising as such but sees its task as one of creating a climate of opinion that will encourage gifts to churches and colleges.

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## U.S.C.C. Conferences

The United Student Christian Council is calling students from American campuses to participate in one of seven regional ecumenical conferences during the Christmas holiday period 1956. The emphasis will be on the united witness of the campus Christian community within the colleges and universities of America. Outstanding speakers and study groups will address themselves to such questions as:

What does it mean for us to be the people of God?

What is the function of the University?

To this end it expects to cooperate with the Council for Financial Aid to Education in fact-finding and research and to provide leadership that will enable colleges to work together in programs designed to improve the quality of public relations, fund-raising, trustee leadership, and internal life.

General aims of the Committee have been stated as follows: 1. Seek to rally membership of the churches to greater support of their church-related colleges. 2. To enlist additional men who will pledge their active support of and give their time and energy to a program of practical college assistance. 3. To work with the Commission on Christian Higher Education and the General Department of United Church Men of the National Council of Churches in helping the colleges help themselves through cooperative activity. The Committee will make its own decisions regarding program, but suggestions from college presidents will be warmly welcomed.

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How can we manifest our unity as Christian students?

An outstanding study book has been prepared by Denis Baly on the theme, *Chosen Peoples*. This volume focuses for the student an understanding of God's call to the community of learning, the nation, and the Church, and tries to show how each of these can be understood as a chosen community on the basis of the Biblical notion of the people of God.

Further information about the conferences or copies of the book (\$1.25) can be obtained from the USCC office, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

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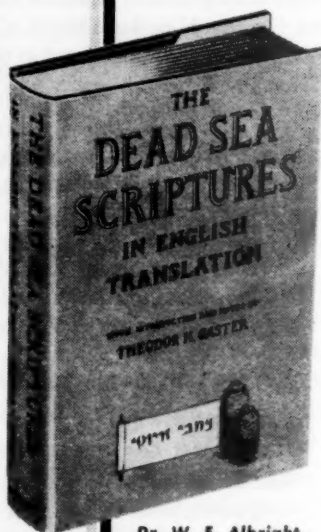
With introduction and notes by  
**THEODOR H. GASTER**

The fascinating story of the Dead Sea Community, of how its members lived and worshipped, of their Manual of Discipline and their plan of action for Armageddon, gives us a new and illuminating view of the backdrop against which the first act of the Christian drama was performed. It has also given rise to the most intense theological controversy in years. But "amid all the dust and confusion, no one has allowed the documents to speak for themselves," says Dr. Gaster, one of the world's foremost Hebraists and a leading authority on the period from which the Dead Sea scrolls derive. Translating all but the as yet unassembled fragments, Dr. Gaster gives us here, for the first time in English, a comprehensive and complete presentation in English of the scrolls themselves. In addition he provides an extensive introduction that places the scrolls in history, relates them to their contemporary surroundings and deals with their relation to the Old Testament and Christianity. He provides us too with separate introductions to each scroll, illuminating the particular problems that arise in them. Finally he has prepared a thorough index of themes and passages that appear in the scrolls and are found as well in the Old and New Testaments, so that the reader can see for himself what bearing these crucial documents have on the birth of Christianity out of Judaism.

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